

**The Austin Community College
Developmental Education Plan:
Texas Success Initiative
Academic Year 2007-2008**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	Page 3
Part I. ACC’s TSI Developmental Education Plan.....	Page 4
TSI Exemptions/Exceptions.....	Page 4
Assessment.....	Page 6
Minimum Passing Standards.....	Page 6
Advisement.....	Page 6
College-Readiness Standards.....	Page 7
Exceptions to Testing.....	Page 7
Delays	Page 8
Special Requirements for Paired Courses and Learning Communities.....	Page 8
Transfer Students from Public Institutions in Texas.....	Page 9
Transfer Students from Private, Independent, and Out-of-State Institutions.....	Page 9
Retesting.....	Page 9
Monitoring Student’s Individual Plans.....	Page 9
Evaluation and Reporting.....	Page 10

Part II ACC's Developmental Education Program.....	Page 11
Objectives	Page 11
Strategies	Page 12
Components.....	Page 13
Support for Developmental Students.....	Page 15
Learning Strategies	Page 17
Procedures to Ensure Quality	Page 20
Continuous Quality Improvement	Page 21
Outcome Measures	Page 22
Using Evaluation Results	Page 25
Conclusion.....	Page 26

**The Austin Community College Developmental Education Plan:
Texas Success Initiative
Academic Year 2007-2008**

Austin Community College's Developmental Education Plan adheres to the policies established by the Texas Legislature regarding the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). The College's Plan is designed to assist students who are not prepared for college-level work so that they acquire the basic knowledge and skills required in order to achieve academic success. This Plan is developed in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Texas Education Code Sections 51.307, 51.3062 and 51.403 (e), "Subchapter C: Texas Success Initiative."

Introduction

Developmental Education is the title given to instruction provided for students enrolled in institutions of higher learning who are unable to demonstrate that they possess the necessary reading, writing and math skills for success at the college level. Since Austin Community College is an open door institution, any student with a diploma from an accredited high school or home school program, any student who has successfully completed all requirements of a General Education Development (GED) program, or any person 18 years of age or over that can demonstrate an ability to benefit from instruction may enroll in the College. However, possession of a high school or GED diploma has not proven to be a reliable indicator of college readiness. Many students who are new high school graduates and some who have been out of school for a time have test results which reflect deficiencies in basic skills. Because this has been identified as a statewide problem, the Legislature issued a mandate, promulgated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, that requires all first-time-in-college students, unless otherwise exempt, to be assessed prior to enrolling in college-level work.

Austin Community College's Developmental Education Plan has been developed for the express purpose of assisting under-prepared college students to master the reading, writing and mathematics skills necessary to achieve a level of academic competence to perform successfully in their college level courses.

The following ACC TSI Developmental Education Plan is divided into two major sections. Part I describes the TSI requirements and how the College assists students in meeting these requirements. Part II describes the Developmental Education Program ACC has adopted to ensure that students develop the skills necessary to succeed in college-level curricula and to move as quickly as possible through their Individual Plan. Specifically, it explains the developmental education objectives, the instructional strategies and outcome measures ACC uses to ensure accountability and program effectiveness.

PART I. ACC's TSI DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PLAN

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a state mandated program which focuses on student learning and program results and allows institutions flexibility in designing a plan which allows students to obtain the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in college-level work. The state guidelines require that the institution develop an individual plan for each student who does not meet college readiness standards. The following are guidelines for students who are considered exemptions or exceptions to participation in developmental education:

TSI Exemptions/Exceptions

1. A student shall be exempted from the requirements of TSI if:
 - a. For a period of five (5) years from the date of testing, the following scores are achieved on the ACT or SAT tests:
 - i. ACT: composite score of 23 with a minimum of 19 on both the English test and the mathematics test;
 - ii. SAT: a combined score of 1070 with a minimum of 500 on both the verbal test and the mathematics test.
 - b. For a period of three (3) years from the date of testing, the following scores are achieved on the Eleventh grade exit-level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS):
 - i. A minimum scale score of 2200 on the math section and/or;
 - ii. A minimum scale score of 2200 on the English Language Arts section with a writing subsection score of at least 3.
 - c. The student has graduated with an associate or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher education and submits appropriate documentation of the degree.
 - d. The student has transferred from an accredited private or independent institution of higher education or a regionally accredited out-of-state institution of higher education and has passed a course equivalent to an ACC Core Curriculum course with a grade of "C" or better. The student is considered exempt in reading, writing, or math if the course passed requires that specific skill.
 - e. The student has previously attended any regionally accredited Texas public institution of higher education and has been determined by that institution to have met TSI college-readiness standards.
 - f. The student is enrolled in a Level-One certificate program of one year or less (42 or fewer semester credit hours or the equivalent).

Assessment

ACC assesses the academic skills of each entering first-time-in-college undergraduate student prior to enrollment of the student. Under exceptional circumstances, as listed on page 7 of this plan, ACC permits a student to enroll in freshman-level academic coursework without assessment but requires the student to be assessed not later than the end of the first semester of enrollment in freshman-level academic coursework.

For initial testing purposes, ACC administers the COMPASS Test or the ASSET Test, both approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. ACC charges a fee for initial tests and retests. For TSI purposes, a student must complete a writing sample, whereas for placement purposes only, a writing sample is not required.

ACC also accepts the documented scores of all other assessment instruments approved by THECB: ACCUPLACER, and the Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA) and the Quick THEA.

Minimum Passing Standards

The following minimum passing standards are used to determine a student's readiness to enroll in freshman-level academic coursework:

- (1) ASSET: Reading Skills 41; Elementary Algebra 38; Writing Skills (objective) 40; and Written Essay 5 or 6*.
- (2) COMPASS: Reading Skills 81; Algebra 39; Writing Skills (objective) 59; and Written Essay 5 or 6*.
- (3) ACCUPLACER: Reading Comprehension 78; Elementary Algebra 63; Sentence Skills 80; and Written Essay 5 or 6*.
- (4) THEA/Quick THEA: Reading 230; Mathematics 230; Writing 220.

* The minimum passing standard for the written essay portion of all tests is a score of 6. However, an essay with a score of 5 or better will meet this standard if the student meets the objective writing test standard.

Advisement

ACC requires advisement for any student who fails to achieve a passing score on any component of the initial assessment test. Counselors and advisors provide information regarding a student's TSI Individual Plan to ensure the readiness of that student in performing freshman-level academic coursework.

The counselors and advisors, working with the student, determine a TSI Individual Plan for academic success of that student. Each Plan for academic success shall:

- (1) Be designed on an individual basis to provide the best opportunity for each student to succeed in performing freshman-level coursework;
- (2) Provide to the student a description of the appropriate developmental education considered necessary to ensure the readiness of that student to perform freshman-level academic coursework;
- (3) Provide to the student an appropriate measure for determining readiness to perform freshman-level academic coursework.

ACC follows all federal laws pertaining to individuals with disabilities when assessing and advising students with different abilities or needs. Students with a documented disability may appeal the college-readiness standard or be provided an alternative method of achieving college readiness.

College-Readiness Standards

ACC students can demonstrate college readiness in any of the following ways:

- Passing any state-approved test on the initial attempt or any subsequent attempt;
- Earning a grade of “C” or better on the exit-level developmental course. ACC has set the following courses as exit-level:

Reading: Reading Skills II, DEVR 1313 or ESOL 0364,
Advanced Reading and Vocabulary Skills ESOL

Writing: Writing Skills II, DEVW 1413 or ESOL 0384,
Advanced Writing and Vocabulary Skills ESOL

Mathematics: Intermediate Algebra, MATD 0390

Transfer students who are not exempt must demonstrate college-readiness in the same manner as non-transfer students.

Exceptions to Testing

A student who has not been tested may enroll in coursework but must take a TSI state-approved test not later than the end of the first semester of enrollment. If any student under this section does not test during the designated semester, the student will not be permitted to re-enroll at Austin Community College in any courses other than courses without skill prerequisites until he or she has tested.

Untested students can enroll in college-level courses which have no skill prerequisites only if they meet the exceptional circumstances, which include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Documented illness, injury or other bona fide emergency which prevents a student from testing;
- (2) Diagnosed and documented disability for which reasonable and appropriate accommodations could not be provided by ACC in a timely manner;
- (3) Students who, through no fault of their own, have not been tested.

Delays

Students begin their Individual Plan during their first semester at the College, except when the following circumstances occur:

- Students who need only Developmental Mathematics may postpone taking mathematics until their third semester at ACC unless their chosen major leads to an AS/BS degree, or an AAS degree or certificate with significant math skill requirements.
- Students with deficiencies in all three skill areas, who need Developmental Mathematics in addition to Developmental Reading and/or Developmental Writing, may postpone taking math until their fourth semester at ACC unless their chosen major leads to an AS/BS degree, or an AAS degree or certificate with significant math skill requirements. In cases of the latter, students are required to be enrolled in continuous remediation in mathematics and either reading or writing, but not both. This continuous remediation can be accomplished through computer-based instruction.
- These delays and requirements do not apply to Early College Start students.

Special Requirements for Paired Courses and Learning Communities

Students in developmental courses who score 78 or above on the COMPASS Reading placement test may register for a paired developmental and college-level course. Presently, these paired courses include Developmental Reading and History, and Developmental Reading and Psychology. If a student withdraws or is withdrawn from either of the paired courses, the student must withdraw or be withdrawn from the other paired course.

Students in developmental courses who score 59-81 (without the essay) on the COMPASS writing placement test or score 51-58 (with an essay score of 5 or above) on the COMPASS, and have passed the reading portion of a state-approved test or completed Reading Skills II with a "C" or better, may register for the learning community: Writing Skills II and English Composition I.

Transfer Students from Public Institutions in Texas

ACC accepts proof of completion of TSI requirements in reading, writing, or mathematics by students transferring from any public institution in Texas. To demonstrate completion of TSI requirements for reading, writing, or math, a student must provide documentation of completion of the TSI requirements in that area. A student who does not provide documentation of completion of the TSI requirements in reading, writing, or math is subject to ACC's Developmental Education Plan in the same manner as non-transfer ACC students.

Transfer Students from Out-of-State, Independent, or Private Texas Institutions

ACC considers a student who transfers from a private or independent institution of higher education or an accredited out-of-state institution as college ready in reading, writing, or mathematics if the student has passed the equivalent of an ACC Core Curriculum course listed in the College catalog that requires that specific skill, with a grade of "C" or better.

Retesting

Students who have tested but have not met the passing standards set by THECB may retest to attempt to meet TSI college-readiness standards.

- ACC offers COMPASS retests to students 30 days after initial testing. If a student requests additional retesting, a period of 90 days must transpire before another retest is available. To avoid students retesting on the same essay topic, ACC tracks each student's essay topic for initial and all retests. Once a student has tested on every available prompt, the COMPASS test may not be used to complete the writing portion of the test.
- For the initial testing only, students taking the THEA/Quick THEA who do not achieve an acceptable score may re-test within 10 days.
- ACC accepts retest scores taken at other Texas institutions.
- ACC informs students about self-study resources.
- ACC offers the ASSET test as an initial test only. It is not be used for a retest.
- The retest does not have to be taken on the same test instrument as the initial test.

Monitoring Students' Individual Plans

Students who do not meet the standards on their initial testing must work with advisors or faculty to develop a TSI Individual Plan. This plan outlines a course of action which must be completed by students.

- ACC enforces mandatory remediation. In order to assure student compliance, ACC has students sign the Mandatory Remediation Agreement section on the Advising Form. A student may simultaneously enroll in college-level courses, if the student has the specific prerequisite skills required for those courses.
- ACC places a “CSI Hold” on former students who have not demonstrated college-readiness. This hold requires the student to see a counselor or advisor for an update on their TSI Individual Plan prior to re-enrolling.
- ACC’s TSI Coordinator monitors the effectiveness of tracking systems related to student participation in Individual Plans.
- When students are not in compliance with their Individual Plan, ACC offers students Course Credit Alternative (CCA) courses. Through these courses students can temporarily deviate from their original Individual Plan for one semester. This alternative must be approved by the student’s CCA Coordinator. The Coordinator must notify the TSI Coordinator and the Admissions Office.
- When students are not able to be successful in an aspect of their Individual Plan, despite their regular participation and substantial effort, ACC offers students Course Credit Exchange (CCE) courses. This exchange must be approved by the student’s CCE Coordinator. The CCE Coordinator must notify the TSI Coordinator and the Admissions Office.
- IP (in progress) grades are awarded to students who remain in their developmental courses, make progress, but do not satisfy course requirements for a “C” or better. Students can receive an IP grade in a particular course no more than two times.

Evaluation and Reporting

At the end of each semester, ACC’s TSI Coordinator reports to the THECB the data required in section 4.60 of Subchapter C, Texas Success Initiative: Social Security Number, semester credit hours, grade points earned, ethnicity, gender, date of birth, TSI status, initial assessment instrument, score on initial assessment, type of developmental education received for each area, (reading, writing, math), grade in first related non-developmental course, and the results of any subsequent assessment.

Additional ACC evaluation measures are listed on pages 22-25 of this Plan.

PART II. ACC's DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Austin Community College's Developmental Education Program is guided by the following statement of philosophy:

As developmental educators, we believe in maximizing the potential of our students and ourselves. We strive to achieve and maintain excellence in teaching and learning endeavors because we believe in the right of all students to excellent post secondary education experiences. It is our mission in developmental education to help students overcome educational barriers that would hinder their personal and academic successes. We create a learning environment in which faculty employ the best practices in their field of developmental education, promote individual initiative, honor diversity, empower independent learning, and encourage risk-taking. As developmental educators, we use teaching strategies emphasizing active learning, problem-solving, and critical thinking, while we model a life-long commitment to learning.

Austin Community College's goal is to move students who need developmental education through the system as quickly as possible, once they master the skills at each level. Any courses and/or programs included in the ACC's TSI Individual Plan are available at the same campus at which students attend class and include the availability of classes through Distance Learning.

Austin Community College offers a variety of opportunities for students to reach their goal of becoming successful in college-level courses. During a two-year period of curricular review, the faculty in Developmental Communications, Developmental Mathematics and Communications identified the following objectives and strategies as being critical to the success of developmental education students:

Objectives

- Expedite and improve the remediation process.
- Increase retention rates of developmental education students.
- Support Student Services in implementing an early and intensive intervention program for developmental education students.
- Improve and increase all resources available to teach and assist developmental students. This includes faculty, staff, funding, space, learning labs and tutorial assistance, equipment, and technology.
- Develop an evaluation process which measures and encourages continuous improvement of developmental education instruction and activities.
- Increase and improve coordination of developmental education activities.
- Develop and implement an operational plan to support achieving strategic objectives.

Strategies

Achieving the identified goals is, to a large extent, dependent on the quality of the course, the expertise and competence of the faculty, the accurate assessment and placement of students, and having the necessary instructional resources.

A Qualified, Competent Faculty:

Faculty who work with developmental students must be among the best prepared of all faculty. Recognizing this, Austin Community College has employed a well-prepared, well-credentialed faculty who demonstrate a high level of expertise and continue to participate in professional development activities to ensure the currency and relevancy of their knowledge. An overall goal of Austin Community College is to increase the number of full-time faculty who teach developmental courses.

Because of the centralization of Developmental Mathematics within the Mathematics Department, full-time faculty are expected to teach both developmental and credit mathematics courses on a regular basis. All new full-time faculty applications are reviewed with the expectation that faculty must be prepared and competent at teaching both Developmental Mathematics and college-level Mathematics courses.

Once these faculty are employed, both full-time and adjunct faculty participate in a comprehensive orientation program. In addition to receiving faculty manuals which contain information needed by all new faculty, these new faculty are also mentored by an experienced faculty member, and must attend professional development activities which are a part of the on-going development for continuing faculty.

Developmental education enrolls some of the neediest students with the weakest educational backgrounds, and thus requires the greatest amount of experienced faculty support. To adequately plan and integrate developmental education successfully, full-time faculty and staff are needed to provide appropriate instruction and guidance. Full-time faculty are better positioned to provide greater continuity in curriculum development, student advising, and instruction.

Faculty have been a strong link in the developmental education program; however, it was recognized that there was a need to better assess the skills students bring with them when they enter college. Once information is obtained on skill level, a determination can be made about placement in courses appropriate to the student's skill levels.

Assessment and Placement:

Research has shown that mandatory assessment and placement in an appropriate program is fundamental to building a successful foundation for college work. The purpose of assessment at Austin Community College is to determine the level at which students perform in basic skills. The assessment identifies those students who are not yet college-ready. The Individual Plan ensures that students are appropriately placed in instruction that remediates identified skill deficiencies.

Components

ACC concurs with Robert McCabe, who in a report on developmental education, recommended that an assessment program that is linked to educational prescriptions should be instituted. Assessment must go beyond identifying those who are deficient. It should also provide the basis for learning solutions, build bridges to other courses that address skill deficiencies, and provide pathways to college-level curriculum.

Austin Community College assesses, orients and advises students using intake and placement models designed by the College as part of a student's developmental education requirements.

Required Orientation – ACC requires all new and transfer students who have earned less than 12 credit hours to complete orientation. In addition to attending an orientation session before the start of classes, students who do not pass two or more subtests of a TSI state-approved test or who score at the basic-skill level on a subtest of a TSI state-approved test must register for Human Development (HUDE 0111), Developmental Study Skills (DSSK 0012), or Developmental Study Skills (DSSK 0013) during their first ten hours at ACC. In the Human Development Course, students are administered an instrument designed to assist students in identifying their educational goals, personal strengths, college resources and services, and also explore strategies for academic success such as time-management , decision-making, and study skills.

If the College is unable to offer enough of these courses during a specific semester to meet the demand or students are unable to register for these courses, then students are allowed to delay registering for these courses until the next semester. However, the intent is for students to take HUDE 0111, DSSK 0012, or DSSK 0013 as one of their developmental education courses.

Required Assessment – ACC has implemented the Texas law that requires students to be assessed before attending college-credit classes or demonstrate that they are TSI exempt or TSI waived. Students in TSI waived certificate programs must take appropriate ACC placement tests if courses in their educational plan have basic skill prerequisites.

Required Counseling – Students whose assessment scores indicate they have not met the college-readiness standard in two or more developmental courses must continue to meet with a counselor or a faculty advisor until they successfully achieve college-readiness standards. Students are required to have a counselor's approval of their proposed schedule before registering.

Students with skills deficiencies in two or more areas are required to enroll in *Transition to College Success* or *Basic Study Skills*, courses designed to assist in developing study skills and in adjusting to college.

Mandatory Load Limits – Students whose assessment scores indicate that they need developmental courses in two or more areas are not allowed to take more than 10 college credit hours in a sixteen week semester and no more than 6-8 college credit hours in an 8 week or a 5.5 week semester. If two required developmental courses are Reading and Writing, the student must follow the stated limitation in credit hours and be enrolled in at least one developmental course.

Intent Information – ACC collects “intent” data each time a college-credit student registers for classes. Having this information assists the College to track student progress and performance and helps to reinforce accomplishment of their goals.

Early Warning Signs – The College employs a Standards of Progress system, which identifies students whose grade point average is less than 2.0, or who complete less than 50% of the courses for which they register. Such students are directed to appropriate interventions. Students whose GPA and completion rates do not improve after one term must meet with a counselor and receive their approval before registering for additional classes in the subsequent semester.

System Of Success (SOS) – When students are unable to meet course standards and achieve course objectives at a level satisfactory for academic success, they are referred to the System of Success Program. This is an early warning system designed to identify a student at risk and connect the student with appropriate college resources through proactive advising and counseling.

Degree Audit System – ACC has an automated degree audit system that allows students to verify their progress toward their educational objectives. This system helps students taking developmental classes to track their academic progress and plan for their next courses.

Mandatory Advising for New Students – All new students must meet with a counselor or an advisor. In general,

- **Counselors** work with new students who have not met college-readiness standards in two or more areas, transfer students on academic probation or suspension from another institution, and students who have not selected a major.
- **Advisors** work with new students who have not met college-readiness standards in one area, transfer students in good academic standing at their previous institution, and students who have declared a major.

Advising Returning or Currently Enrolled Students – Advisors monitor the progress of, and advise students who need only one developmental course, usually mathematics. Faculty advisors who teach developmental courses conference with students when needed or if the students are referred by a faculty colleague or ACC

advisor. Additional monitoring is provided by ACC's TSI Coordinator as described on page 9.

Support for Developmental Students

- Tutoring in all three developmental areas is offered free of charge in the learning labs on campuses.
 - Departments maintain coordination between the curricula and the tutoring services and Instructional Associates (content specialists) working in the tutoring labs.
 - The Learning Labs meet the certification standards of the College Reading and Learning Association.
- Services provided by Retention and Student Services:
 - **Career Counseling** – Through classes, small group activities, workshops, and a computer-assisted counseling system, counselors assist students to clarify their career and educational goals.
 - **Discovery Wheel** – Developmental students in HUDE 0111 may complete the Discovery Wheel, the results of which are used to help students understand their strengths, weaknesses, and support-service needs.
 - **Crisis Counseling** – Counselors assist students to deal with unexpected crises that could prevent them from achieving their career and educational goals. Counselors must refer such students to community resources if the student requires continued counseling services beyond the immediate crisis intervention.
 - **Educational Planning** – Counselors and Advisors assist students who have selected a program of study to develop an individual plan to reach their educational and career goals. Counselors assist students who have not selected a program of study to develop academic plans that keep their options open.
 - **Referral to, and Partnerships with, Community Agencies** – Retention and Student Services staff work with community agencies such as the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, and the Travis County Mental Health Association to provide support services to students.
 - **Support for Students with Disabilities** – The Office for Students with Disabilities assists any student (including students in developmental education courses) who has a documented disability in receiving reasonable accommodations.
- Instructional methodologies:

To meet the goal of providing a curriculum that supports student success, the developmental education faculty has developed a program of study which benchmarks best practices. This program, developed in conjunction with Student Services, reflects a model which uses instructional methodologies and support services designed to improve student retention and success.

Adult learners demonstrate a need for a diversity of instructional methodologies. To address the unique learning needs and styles of these students, the developmental education faculty developed courses using a variety of formats, delivery modes, and innovative approaches.

Teaching methods vary according to the needs of learners. The methods selected are consistent with “best practices” and employed in a manner which sequences learning activities and student outcomes so they build a solid foundation of reading, writing and mathematical skills. The curriculum is reviewed formally, on an annual basis, and informally, on an ongoing basis. Feedback obtained during the review and evaluation process is used to make necessary curricular changes.

Research shows that adults learn from observing, practicing, and receiving feedback; expect conscientious instructors who can present information effectively; and vary greatly in their educational level, life experiences and motivations for achievement, and respond better when material is presented through a variety of teaching methods on different sensory levels. Some of those methodologies include workshops, seminars, tutoring, supplemental instruction, learning labs, distance learning, continuing education (test preparation workshops), linked courses and computer mediated learning.

The curriculum also includes a variety of regular and accelerated formats designed to accommodate individual student needs and learning styles. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Paired Courses/Learning Communities** – This combination of courses pairs a section of a developmental reading or writing course with a section of an introductory (college freshman) level content course
- **Flexible-Entry Format** – These sections are designed for students who have difficulty scheduling a reading course that meets at a designated time and place through an entire semester. The instructor and the student plan a course of study that covers the same objectives as those in a traditional approach but the course meeting times are flexible.
- **Fast Track** – Students have the option of completing a two-course developmental sequence within one semester by registering for an 8-week, level 1 course during the first eight weeks and the second level during the second 8 weeks. This arrangement allows student to sometimes complete their remediation in a single semester. Another fast track option allows students to register for developmental education courses in a 12-week session.
- **Test Preparation Workshops** – Students may participate in a number of test preparation venues such as workshops, small group sessions, or individualized course work. In addition, THEA and other assessment preparations are scheduled prior to official testing dates.

- **Computer-Based Instruction** – Computer based instruction allows students to utilize the latest technology to improve their skills. This includes:
 - Computer-mediated software programs involving Pre-algebra, Elementary Algebra, and Intermediate Algebra, allowing the students to determine the pace as they work through the Developmental Mathematics courses. Computer-mediated sections of all courses are offered at each campus during the fall and spring semesters. Distance learning sections are offered every semester in multiple sessions.
 - Supplemental computer-based instruction is included in all developmental communications and mathematics courses.
- **Distance Learning** – Reading, Writing, vocabulary and spelling are offered through distance learning.
- **Hybrid Courses** – the hybrid Reading Skills II course combines reduced weekly in-class meetings with online learning activities.
- **Intensive instruction** – Students who enter college with the lowest levels benefit from additional time on task to succeed. This instruction requires students to take a lab course in addition to their regular course. The lab work provides supervised practice and concept application for students.

Learning Strategies

Tables 1 and 2 below identify learning strategies which evolved from pilot projects and are now integrated into the developmental education curriculum.

Table 1: Learning Strategies—Developmental Communications

Instructional Strategy	Objectives
<p>Paired Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading / History • Reading / Psychology • Writing / English Composition 	<p>Allows students to complete remediation in a concentrated format using content in one course to reinforce learning in another course.</p> <p>This combination of courses pairs specific sections of Reading Skills II with a college-level content course such as Psychology. The paired courses are taken concurrently, thus, allowing a student to complete the reading requirement and obtain credit in a college-level course at the same time.</p>
<p>Flexible Scheduling of Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading – 12 week session 	<p>Provides students with an alternative method of instruction that better accommodates their schedules.</p>
<p>Fast Track Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Skills I – 8 weeks • Reading Skills II – 8 weeks • Writing Skills II – 8 weeks 	<p>Fast Track courses allow students who score at a higher cut-off on the assessment test to complete their remediation in one 16-week semester.</p> <p>Fast-Tracked courses allow students to complete two developmental writing courses in one 16-week semester or one summer, thus offering the opportunity of becoming college-ready in one semester.</p>
<p>Hybrid Reading Skills II Courses</p>	<p>The Hybrid Reading Skills II course combines reduced in-class meetings with online learning activities as an alternative method of instruction.</p>
<p>Computer-Mediated Courses</p>	<p>Allows students to choose an alternative method of instruction using technology to complete course requirements. Computer-mediated instruction allows students to set their own pace.</p>
<p>Distance Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Vocabulary • Mathematics • Writing • Spelling 	<p>Provides an alternative delivery method of instruction for students who do not require face-to-face contact with the instructor to successfully complete course requirements. This asynchronous mode of delivery allows students more flexibility in establishing their course schedule.</p>
<p>Triangle Project Learning Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamentals skills Triangle • Skills I Triangle • English Composition I, Writing Skills II • Intersecting Learning Communities 	<p>Students have an opportunity to study an integrated curriculum and work in a Learning Community setting in which knowledge and skills learned in each course reinforces the requisite knowledge and skills in other courses in the cluster.</p> <p>The Learning Community format allows students to develop and maintain study groups, and supportive relationships with other students and faculty.</p>
<p>Developmental Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Lab • Writing Lab 	<p>Students in co-requisite classes and lab activities will have more time on task to develop skills by practicing reading and/or writing concepts.</p>

Table 2: Learning Strategies--Developmental Mathematics

Instructional Strategy	Objectives
<p>Flexible Scheduling of Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 week • 12 week • 8 week 	<p>Allows for students to schedule the necessary courses in a variety of different timeframes.</p> <p>Students will not be turned away from enrollment because of a lack of available courses.</p>
<p>Fast Track Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Math Skills – 8 weeks • Elementary Algebra – 8 weeks • Intermediate Algebra – 8 weeks • Elementary Algebra / Intermediate Algebra – 16 weeks 	<p>Provides students with an alternative method of instruction in a more concise format.</p> <p>Fast Track courses allow students to complete two developmental mathematics courses in one 16-week semester, thus offering the opportunity of becoming college-ready in one semester.</p>
<p>Computer-Mediated Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Math Skills • Elementary Algebra • Intermediate Algebra 	<p>Provides an alternative delivery method of instruction.</p> <p>Allows students to choose an alternative method of instruction using technology to complete course requirements. Computer-mediated instruction allows students to set their own pace.</p>
<p>Distance Learning Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Math Skills • Elementary Algebra • Intermediate Algebra 	<p>Allows students to choose an alternative method of instruction.</p> <p>Allows students with scheduling difficulties to take classes in a self-controlled timeframe. All courses are offered every semester in the 16 and 12 weeks sessions.</p>
<p>Distance Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Vocabulary • Mathematics • Writing • Spelling 	<p>Provides an alternative delivery method of instruction for those students who are self-directed and can complete course requirements in an asynchronous environment.</p>
<p>Paired Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Math Skills/Study Skills • Intersection Learning Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Basic study skills ○ Math ○ Writing 	<p>Allows students to work specifically on study skills as it pertains to success in mathematics courses. Skills obtained in one course reinforce skills in the other paired course.</p>

Data is collected on these instructional strategies with results used in a continuous feed back loop to improve instruction.

Procedures to Ensure Quality

Austin Community College ensures the quality of its developmental education program through the following procedures:

- Annually, the Department Chairs of Developmental Communications, Communications, Mathematics, and EOSL, their respective Deans, the Vice President for Academic Transfer and General & Developmental Education, the Vice President for Student Support & Success Systems, and the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability, meet to review progress on meeting the college's Developmental Education Plan.
- Each Department Chair meets individually with the faculty teaching developmental education courses to review goals, objectives, outcome measures and outcome results of the Developmental Education Plan.
- Both the Developmental Communications and English & Journalism Departments have crossover membership. Faculty plan jointly and provide a link between developmental courses and college-level courses to ensure students are prepared with skills and knowledge to succeed in subsequent college-level coursework. Joint curriculum planning sessions produce common entry and exit-level course criteria, departmental examinations, and formalized curricular reviews and modification to the curriculum.
- Responsibility for Developmental Mathematics courses, along with responsibility for credit mathematics courses, is housed in the Mathematics Department. Full-time mathematics faculty members teach both developmental and credit mathematics courses on a regular basis, and serve on the course committees. The appropriate preparation and flow of the curriculum is an integral part of the responsibility of the department.
- The Departments establish prerequisites and entry-test score performance standards for courses based on research which identifies the relationship between test scores and performance in ACC classes, and best practices at community colleges at the state and national levels. The Department submits any changes in entry-test score performance standards to the Assessment and Advising Task Force and then to the Academic and Campus Affairs Council by February of each year. Council members review the proposed changes and supporting documentation in March and make a recommendation to the Vice Presidents. If the Vice Presidents accept the recommendation, the College implements the entry-test score performance standards at the beginning of the next academic year.

- Goals, objectives, outcome measures and outcome results are reviewed by the relevant Department, which includes all who work with developmental students.
- Students who have not demonstrated college-readiness in reading, writing, or math remain in continuous remediation until successful completion of their approved Individual Plan or until they have met TSI requirements.

Continuous Quality Improvement:

Having in place an effective model for evaluating courses, instructional goals and student performance is one of the key steps in improving the curriculum. However, the results of the evaluation must also be used to improve instructional programs and services. This process creates a means of assuring a cycle of quality improvement in the curriculum.

- **Program Review**

A program review occurs on a five-year cycle; however, an informal review of the developmental program curriculum occurs on an ongoing basis. The program review process provides an opportunity for continually assessing the developmental education program's effectiveness in terms of student achievement, student retention, student outcomes, the effectiveness of the curriculum, the appropriateness and effectiveness of instructional resources, and the preparation of faculty. These elements combined with other institutional resources help to determine the quality of the instructional program. The five-year cycle involved in Program Review allows for intensive analysis with recommendations for improvement in year one followed by four years of implementation and further assessment, before the cycle begins again.

- **Course Standards**

Austin Community College ensures consistency in its developmental courses through the creation of college-wide objectives, entry and exit criteria, syllabi, and departmental exit exams. Faculty members evaluate the courses they teach, students evaluate faculty, and The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability provides information on student success rates and grade distributions by subject area and section. The College uses evaluation results to measure the effectiveness of instructional strategies, identify the types of students who benefit from each approach, identify students who do not benefit from existing instructional approaches, and explore additional ways to support the success of students in achieving their educational goals.

- **Effectiveness Measures**

The College measures outcomes for students who need developmental courses as part of its ongoing institutional effectiveness program. Each fall, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability submits a report to the Vice President for Academic Transfer and General & Developmental Education Programs, the Deans responsible for developmental education courses, and the Department Chairs in whose areas developmental courses are taught. The report compiles data reflecting an assessment of the objectives and strategies and instructional methodologies identified in Tables 1

and 2, and the outcome measures in Table 3 (below). The report also allows faculty who teach developmental courses to identify program strengths and weaknesses and modify the curriculum if necessary.

Data generated by this report provide the foundation for strategic and budget planning activities in all academic areas that offer developmental education opportunities to students.

Outcome Measures

Table 3: Outcome Measures for Developmental Courses

Purpose: To provide campus-wide programs and services that assist academically under-prepared students so that they meet their educational goals.

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
Developmental to Credit Migration Rates		
Students who successfully complete Developmental Writing will be successful in the next credit-level English course.	Based on data from the student database, at least 60% of students who complete Writing Skills II with a grade of "C" or better and then take English Composition I within two years, will complete English Composition I with a grade of "C" or better.	Each semester identify cohorts of students who complete Writing Skills II with a grade of "C" or better, starting in Fall 1997. Each semester thereafter, track the cohort enrollment in English Composition I. Calculate the percentage of those who complete English Composition I with a grade of "C" or better within two years of their completion of Writing Skills II.
Students who successfully complete Developmental Writing will be successful in the next credit-level English course.	Based on data from the student database, students who complete Writing Skills II with a grade of "C" or better and then take English Composition I or English Composition II within two years, will have average course grades within ± 0.3 grade points of the average course grades for all students taking these courses who were not required to take developmental writing.	Each semester identify cohorts of students who complete Writing Skills II with a grade of "C" or better, starting in Fall 1997. Each semester thereafter, track the cohort enrollment in English Composition I and II. Compare the course grades for these students with the course grades for students taking English Composition I and II who did not take Writing Skills II.

Table 3: Outcome Measures for Developmental Courses (continued)

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
Developmental to Credit Migration Rates (continued)		
Students who successfully complete Developmental Reading will be successful in the next credit-level course.	Based on data from the student database, at least 60% of students who complete Reading Skills II with a grade of "C" or better and then take a course designated to meet THEA guidelines within two years will complete the credit-level course with a grade of "C" or better.	Each semester identify cohorts of students who complete Reading Skills II with a grade of "C" or better starting in Fall 1997. Each semester thereafter, track the cohort enrollment in credit-level courses designated to meet THEA guidelines. Calculate the percentage of those who complete these courses with a grade of "C" or better within two years of their completion of Reading Skills II.
Students who successfully complete Developmental Reading will be successful in the next credit-level course.	Based on data from the student database, average course grades of students who complete Reading Skills II with a grade of "C" or better and then take a course designated to meet THEA guidelines within two years will be within ± 0.3 grade points of the average course grades for all students taking these courses.	Each semester identify cohorts of students who complete Reading Skills II with a grade of "C" or better, starting in Fall 1997. Each semester thereafter, track the cohort enrollment in courses designated to meet THEA guidelines. Compare the course grades for these students with the course grades for students taking these courses who did not take Reading Skills II.
Students who successfully complete Developmental Mathematics will be successful in the next credit-level math course.	Based on data from the student database, at least 60% of students who complete Intermediate Algebra with a grade of "C" or better and then take College Algebra, Trigonometry, or Topics in Mathematics within two years will complete the credit-level course with a grade of "C" or better.	Each semester identify cohorts of students who complete Intermediate Algebra with a grade of "C" or better, starting in Fall 1997. Each semester thereafter, track the cohort enrollment in College Algebra or Trigonometry or Topics in Mathematics. Calculate the percentage of those who complete these courses with a grade of "C" or better within two years of their completion of Intermediate Algebra.
Students who successfully complete Developmental Mathematics will be successful in the next credit-level math course.	Based on data from the student database, average course grades of students who complete Intermediate Algebra with a grade of "C" or better and then take College Algebra, Trigonometry, or Topics in Mathematics within two years will be within ± 0.3 grade points of the average course grades for all students taking these courses.	Each semester identify cohorts of students who complete Intermediate Algebra with a grade of "C" or better, starting in Fall 1997. Each semester thereafter, track the cohort enrollment in College Algebra, Trigonometry, or Topics in Mathematics. Compare the course grades for these students with the course grades for students taking these courses who did not take Intermediate Algebra.

Table 3: Outcome Measures for Developmental Courses (continued)

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
Fall to Spring Retention Rates		
First-Time in College (FTIC) degree seeking students enrolled at ACC in the fall semester who are required to take developmental courses will return the following Spring semester (Fall-to-Spring Retention).	Based on data provided by the THECB, the percentage of (FTIC) degree-seeking students enrolled in developmental education courses in the fall semester who return the following spring semester will not be significantly different from the percentage of students who were not enrolled in developmental education courses who returned in the Spring.	Using THECB <i>Annual Data Profile</i> report, compare the re-enrollment rates of students taking developmental courses with the rate of those who are not.
First-Time in College (FTIC) degree seeking students enrolled at ACC in the fall semester who are required to take developmental courses will return the following spring semester (Fall-to-Spring Retention).	Based on data provided by the THECB, the percentage of FTIC degree-seeking students enrolled in developmental education courses in the fall semester who return the following spring semester will not be significantly different from the state average for students enrolled in developmental education courses.	Using THECB <i>Annual Data Profile</i> report, compare ACC and statewide average Fall-to-Spring retention rates.
There will be no significant differences by demographic group between Fall-to Spring retention rates for FTIC degree or certificate-seeking students enrolled in developmental education courses and those not enrolled in developmental education courses.	Based on data from the THECB Annual Data Profile, for each demographic group, the Fall-to-Spring return rate for FTIC students enrolled in developmental education courses will be within $\pm 5\%$ of the Fall-to-Spring return rate for students NOT enrolled in developmental education courses.	Using data from THECB <i>Annual Data Profile</i> report, compare developmental and non-developmental students' average Fall-to-Spring retention rates by demographic group.
Students who are required to be enrolled in Developmental Education Courses at ACC will complete state-mandated requirements.	Based on data provided by the THECB annually, the percentage of ACC students enrolled in developmental education courses who complete state-mandated requirements will be at or above the completion rates for those students statewide.	Using THECB data for LBB measures, compare ACC and statewide percentages.
Students who are required to enroll in developmental courses will complete their developmental requirements.	Based on collected data, course completion rates will be determined for the following groups of students required to enroll in developmental courses: those required to take developmental courses in one area, those required to take developmental courses in two areas, and those required to take developmental courses in three areas.	Using data from the student database, compare original proficiency levels to last proficiency levels for each area by "group" (developmental courses required in one, two or three areas).
There will be no significant differences between developmental program completion rates by demographic group.	Based on data from the student database, the differences in developmental requirements completion rates among demographic groups will be within $\pm 5\%$.	Using data from the student database, compare original proficiency levels to last proficiency levels for each area by "group" (developmental courses required in one, two or three areas) and by ethnicity.

Table 3: Outcome Measures for Developmental Courses (continued)

Intended Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Methodology
Course Completion Rates		
Students who are required to be placed in developmental courses will complete their courses at rates similar to those taking credit courses.	Based on data from the student database, course completion rates (the percentage of students earning a grade of "C" or better) for developmental courses will be within \pm 5% of course completion rates for credit courses.	Using internally generated reports, compare the average course completion rate for developmental courses with that of credit courses.

In addition to the outcomes report generated by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Accountability, faculty who teach developmental courses and the administrators who work with them also analyze the following data each fall provided by the OIEA:

- Demographics of students who do not succeed.
 - Item analyses of departmental exams.
 - Numbers of students registering for Developmental Math (MATD), Developmental Reading (DEVR), Developmental Writing (DEVW), and Developmental ESOL (ESOL) during the preceding year.
- Number of students registering for MATD, DEVR, DEVW, and ESOL courses by demographic characteristics (ethnicity, gender, age, zip code).
- Grade distributions for students in MATD, DEVR, DEVW, and ESOL.
 - Grade distributions of students in MATD, DEVR, DEVW, and ESOL courses by demographic characteristics (ethnicity, gender, age, zip code).
 - Student academic performance in subsequent college-level course work.

Using Evaluation Results and Outcome Measures to Improve Programs and Services

- The faculty who teach developmental education courses review the results of the evaluation results and outcome measures regularly in their departmental task force.
- The results drive immediate (section counts, syllabi changes, instructor training, programmatic improvements) and long term analyses (updating the strategic plan, developing the budget for the next year, requesting additional personnel, eliminating or modifying a teaching approach or strategy).
- The faculty who teach developmental courses document their use of results to drive change and communicate the changes to the College Community through a unit-level plan developed in conjunction with the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, Department Chairs and Deans.
- The Deans provide instructional leadership in developing, evaluating, and maintaining a curriculum that meets the College’s goals for student success. Through their oversight, guidance, and review of applicable portions of the

Developmental Education Plan, and in concert with the Department Chairs and the faculty, the Deans ensure program improvements are incorporated into the plan during the annual review and update.

Conclusion

ACC recognizes that having a solid foundation in reading, writing and mathematics is essential to success in college-level course work, and that many students who enroll in college are not prepared to succeed at this level. The College is committed to eliminating barriers in the educational process; therefore, its Developmental Education Plan is reflective of this commitment.

One of the major goals of the developmental education program is to assist students to move through remediation as quickly as possible with the skills necessary for success in college-level course work. This plan's activities and strategies are directed at accomplishing this goal.

The plan recognizes that no single instructional approach meets the needs of all students. Students have different learning styles, educational goals, timelines, resources, and support systems, and thus, the plan reflects a broad-based, comprehensive approach to assisting students to meet their educational needs.

The plan provides both structure and flexibility. It provides the structure necessary to accomplish assessment and placement; it makes connections and linkages to institutional support services, while also having the flexibility that students need to select the mode of instruction, scheduling options or instructional strategies that meet their particular needs.

The developmental education plan is a living document in that the plan and its effectiveness are reviewed on an annual basis by a committee of faculty, staff, and students and updated as appropriate, based on the outcome of the curricular review.