

McHenry Team – Project Scope Statement

Redefining the High School to College Transition in Illinois

Catch-up Models: Multiple Factors for Determining Placement into Developmental Education

At McHenry County College (MCC), “Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal.” To achieve that goal, part of MCC’s strategy is to ensure that students take classes appropriate to their skill level, which in many cases means developmental courses. In 2013, 54% of recent high school graduates enrolled at MCC took at least one developmental course (MCC OIR). Having to enroll in developmental coursework is a significant barrier to future college and career success, considering that two-thirds of students referred to developmental courses never go on to enroll in credit-bearing classes (Bailey, Jeong and Cho, 2010).

MCC uses COMPASS to determine which students require developmental courses. However, recent research indicates that placement tests alone are not sufficient to accurately assess which students need developmental courses. ACCUPLACER and COMPASS are reported to severely misplace students approximately 30% of the time (Belfield and Crosta, 2012). Alternatively, using high school GPAs and other performance indicators reduces the rate of students incorrectly placed in developmental courses to about 12%. Taking high school performance into account allows colleges to remediate substantially fewer students without reducing student success rates (Scott-Clayton, Belfield and Crosta, 2012).

MCC and Huntley High School propose using high school GPAs and other performance indicators for designing a system to determine placement at MCC. MCC will be able to provide developmental education only to students who truly need it, thereby reducing the number of students requiring developmental coursework and increasing a student’s chances to be more successful and complete a certificate or degree.

The following outline highlights the people, process, and factors that will be utilized by McHenry County College and Huntley High School (District 158) to implement high school GPAs and other performance indicators for determining a student’s College placement:

1. **Establish a Placement Committee Team consisting of**
 - MCC – Advisor, English teacher, Math teacher
 - Huntley High School – Students’ counselor, current English teacher, current Math teacher
 - MCC administrator assigned as the leader of the Placement Committee – Juletta Patrick, Assistant Vice-President of Academic and Student Affairs
2. **Develop a schedule to screen all Huntley High School seniors who are scheduled for Developmental English and/or Math at MCC for 2015-2016**
 - Teacher conference model (May – June)
 - Students who place out of developmental classes will be tracked for their success during the 2015-2016 academic year
3. **Criteria to be used in screening students:**
 - High School Grade Point Average

- High School grades in English and Math
- Course content, level of classes, remedial, college prep, AP, etc.
- Teacher recommendations
- COMPASS placement scores in English and Math

4. **Travel to Normal, Illinois for required grant meetings**

- Tony Miksa, Vice-president for Academic and Student Affairs, McHenry County College
- Erika Schlichter, Chief Academic Officer, Huntley High School
- Tony Capalbo, Associate Dean for College and Career Readiness, McHenry County College
- Placement Committee Team