

## Response to Chancellor's Office Request for English Cohort Data and Analysis:

At this time, faculty in the English Department at Monterey Peninsula College are unwilling and unable to include English cohort data and analysis in the Basic Skills Committee's annual report to the Chancellor's office. Any inclusion of cohort data and analysis in this report for the English Department at MPC was done against the express wishes of the department and without its input.

As the Chancellor's office did not request the inclusion of cohort data and analysis until June of 2012, and as the aforementioned department was not notified by the BSI Committee at MPC about the inclusion of cohort data and analysis until the week before our fall term started, the department did not have sufficient time to review, vet, augment, or analyze the data retrieved from the state's cohort tracking tool. Consequently, the coordinators of the BSI committee presented their own analysis of data they created for inclusion in the annual report.

Beyond the accelerated time frame, however, the English Department has a larger objection to using data as the sole measure of "student success." Completion and progression data is but one small way of measuring success, and we, as faculty working with basic skills students on a daily basis, find this data does not support what many students deem educational successes in their own lives. Furthermore, English instructors at MPC resist the trend of using statistical data to support broad-based education reform at the college level, a trend that is currently being used to guide decisions in K-12 with detrimental effects, effects we see as every year more and more students enroll in college without the necessary skills to be successful in college-level courses.

Moreover, asking departments to develop goals and action plans based on this data places the responsibility for student success solely on instruction when, in reality, students face many barriers to student success, most of which have nothing whatsoever to do with instruction. Our students' lives are impacted by children and family obligations, work conflicts, health issues, learning disabilities, domestic and gang-related violence, unplanned pregnancy, language barriers, and much more; none of these circumstances is mitigated by classroom instruction, no matter how innovative.

In addition, the English Department questions the reasoning and motivation behind the Chancellor's requirement to include data and analysis using the student cohort data tool. Giving colleges yet another tool to assist in analysis and reflection is one thing, but requiring the college to show proof of using such a tool seems unnecessary.

The English Department also feels that the burden of solving the "crisis in basic skills" has fallen largely on basic skills departments of late. This feeling is augmented by the Chancellor's office's request to include cohort data for English, math, or ESL sequences of classes only. In truth, however, the responsibility for basic skills student success is everyone's, findings supported by the Student Success Task Force's recent recommendations.

For the above reasons, we ask the Chancellor's office to reconsider its requirements for reporting in the long term, and in the short term, excuse MPC from including a hastily constructed and unsupported student cohort data and analysis section to this report.

October 16, 2012