



# Research Brief

## Developmental English Academic Success



Department of Planning, Research, and Effectiveness  
(<http://www.alamo.edu>)

### Achieving the Dream (AtD) Initiative

May 2011

*"Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count" is a multi-year initiative funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education that addresses the challenge of providing low income students and students of color with opportunities for academic success. The AtD student outcome indicators are the following: (1) Successful completion of developmental (remedial) courses and progression to college-level courses; (2) Enrollment and successful completion of college-level "gatekeeper" courses; (3) Productive grades (C or higher) in all courses; (4) Semester to semester persistence; (5) Graduation; and (6) Transfer (a PAC-specific goal). All colleges of the Alamo Community College District participate in this initiative to cultivate and promote a culture of evidence, accountability, equity, and excellence in support of the student outcomes. Feedback? Questions? Contact Mecca Salahuddin, [msalahuddin1@alamo.edu](mailto:msalahuddin1@alamo.edu), (210) 486-2897.*

### What has been the result of Developmental English success initiatives at the College within the last five years?

#### Introduction

At SPC, the English department houses the Rose R. Thomas Writing Center. The Center has been serving the internal and external college community since 1999. Individuals utilizing the Center receive professional assistance on various writing tasks and projects. In 2006, as part of an Achieve the Dream initiative, developmental English, implemented a referral process to the Writing Center. Thus, students who needed extra assistance in their developmental coursework were referred to the Writing Center. However, results were not favorable and the process was not taken to scale.

Beginning in Fall 2009, in an effort to enhance developmental writing at St. Philip's College all developmental writing students were required to co-enroll in a one-hour English Lab. The new lab, which is housed in NTB 405, offers computerized instruction, guided by a staff of Instructional Skills Specialists. In addition to completing skills modules in Writing, the Developmental Lab staff conducts workshops that enhance student understanding of key writing concepts.

#### Methodology

Data were collected on students enrolled in developmental English for the previous five years (2005-2009). Figure 1 shows 46.1% of the students were referred to Level 2 (ENGL0301) of developmental English. English 0301 focuses on topics related to the development of fundamental writing skills such as idea

generation, organization, style, utilization of standard English, and revision. Forty-two percent of the students were referred to college level English.

Following are results based on course completion, successful completion, and enrollment and completion of college level courses, known as gatekeeper courses.

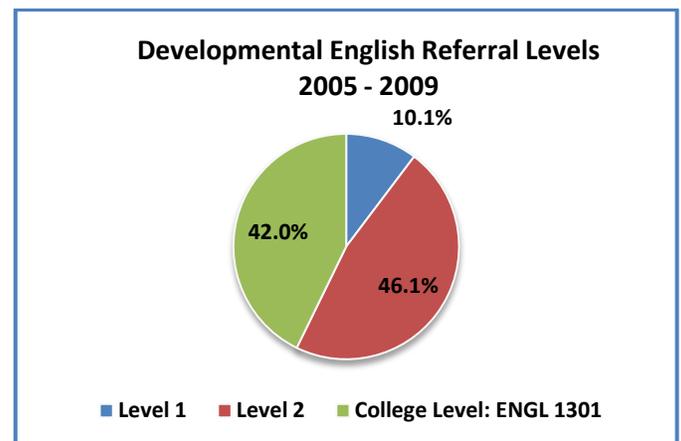


Figure 1: Percentage of Students Referred to Developmental English (2005-2009)

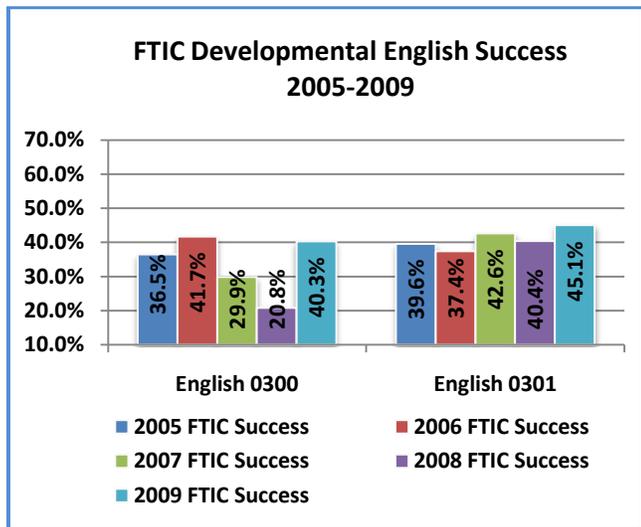
#### Results

##### 1) Successful Course Completion

Successful course completion is defined as the percentage of students who complete the course with a grade of A, B, or C.

The data in Graph 1 shows successful course completion among first time in college (FTIC) students for 2005 -2009. The data indicates an up and down trend in successful course completion among students enrolled in English 0300 and 0301. This up and down trend can be attributed to the implementation of new

initiatives, as well as curriculum changes. However, the data shows when comparing Fall 2005 to Fall 2009 for both 0300 and 0301 there has been an increase in success rates.



Graph 1: FTIC students' success rates in developmental English (2005 -2009).

Figure 2 shows the percentage of students who within three years of enrolling and completing developmental English enroll in college level English – English 1301. English 1301 is considered a gatekeeper course. College Level English focuses on principles and techniques, which may include documentation of written, expository, and persuasive composition; analysis of literary, expository, and/or persuasive texts; emphasis on critical thinking.

As shown, there are a high percentage of students enrolling in College Level English upon completion of their developmental education requirements.

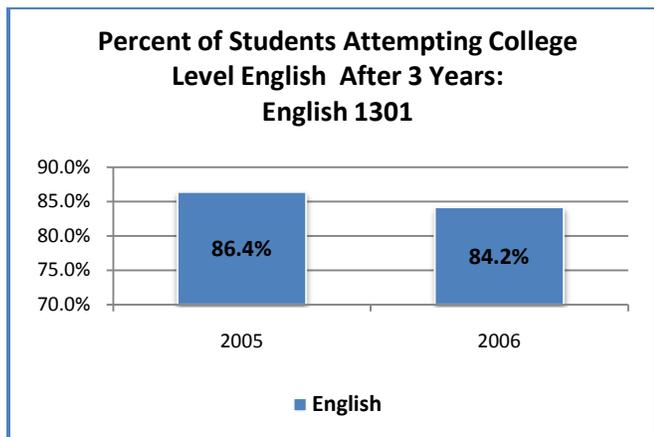
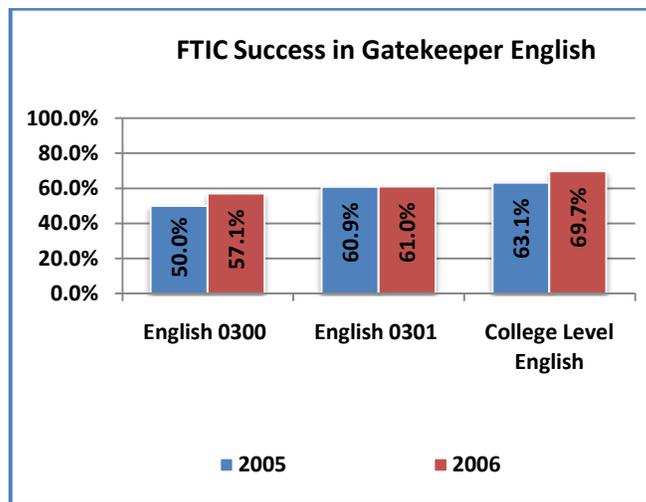


Figure 2: The percentage of students completing developmental English who enrolled in college level English

## 2) Successful Course Completion in College level English

Graph 2 indicates data for the Fall 2005 and 2006 developmental education cohort of students. Results

show an increase in success rates in college-level English among students initially placed in developmental English 0300 and 0301. As well, there was an increase in success rates for those students initially placed in college-level English.



Graph 2: Success Rates in College Level English by initial placement level.

## 3) New Developmental English Initiatives

In addition to the tutoring English lab requirement, SPC English department has implemented additional initiatives to impact student success. These initiatives will consist of:

- a) non-course-based remedial Prep for Accuplacer Student Success (PASS) and
- b) paired courses, the department will merge student-learning outcomes from the highest level of developmental reading (READ 0303) with college-level English 1301 or the highest level of developmental English (ENGL 0301) with the highest level of developmental reading (READ 0303).

**Stay tuned for further information on these new initiatives and the AtD outcome indicators in future research briefs.**

Please visit the Achieve the Dream <http://www.alamo.edu/spc/admin/iprdept/ATD.aspx> website for other Research Briefs.