

DCCCD Retention Best Practice Submission Form

Across the district there are many successful practices that contribute to the retention of students. As the district begins to develop a greater emphasis on its retention strategy, all locations are asked to identify and submit information about successful retention programs and activities. Please complete the following information on selected practices.

College/Location: **Brookhaven College**

The Retention Best Practice is primarily supported by what college/location area:

Instruction Student Services _____ Administrative _____

Combination of areas: (Please list)

Developmental Mathematics

Human Development

Contact Person: (Include contact information)

Math – Debbie Hanus, 972-860-4764

Retention Best Practice Title:

DMAT / HDEV Learning Communities

Retention Best Practice Area of Focus:

Math STEM _____ Honors College _____ Other _____

Retention Best Practice Executive Summary: approximately 50 words (Please use additional pages for a detailed description)

There are approximately 3000 students in developmental math each long semester here at Brookhaven College. The influence that we have on these students' learning is substantial. Our historical numbers show that less than 50 % of these students successfully complete their developmental math (DMAT) course with an A, B or C. Many students drop early in the course or do not continue into the subsequent DMAT course the next semester. Brookhaven offers five levels of DMAT: DMAT 0066 – Basic Arithmetic, 0090 - PreAlgebra, and 0097, 0098, 0099 – Algebra Fundamentals I, II, III. In an effort to engage students, increase retention and focus on collaborative learning skills, a set of Learning Communities (LC) are now offered. One of our first learning communities was the DMAT 0098/0099, HDEV 1300 learning community offered in Fall 2006. The courses offer concentrated learning with a structured community cohort.

Please describe the evaluation measures utilized to support this initiative as a best practice.

End of course grades are compared to traditional courses offered in the same semester. Successful completion is a grade of A, B, C. As mentioned below, the learning communities demonstrate significantly better completion than traditional courses.

Please submit this form to Dr. Sharon L. Blackman, DCCCD Educational Affairs by October 24, 2008

Provide a summary of the results, including data (such as trend lines over time) to show how it impacted retention and is a best practice.

The classes meet four days per week for 16 weeks and are dependently linked. Students attend class together for six hours of math instruction and three hours of human development, study skills instruction. In this example, 71% of the students successfully completed their DMAT courses. This compares in the same semester to a 44 % completion in DMAT 0098 and 50 % in DMAT 0099 regular classes. 88 % of the LC completers are currently enrolled in their next math course this semester. This small but successful step encouraged our current offerings of more learning communities in other combinations to include DMAT 0066/0090 and DMAT 0097/0098 for this and future semesters. Through continued faculty involvement and team work, student participation and accountability, support of the Math Lab and tutoring services, we hope to see long term successes for our students. Our current offerings now include one section of DMAT and one section of HDEV (DMAT 0066/HDEV and DMAT 0090/HDEV). These courses meet 6 hours per week. These successful completion rates are up to 77% compared to 44-49% in the standalone counterparts.

What would be needed to replicate the practice at other DCCCD colleges?

Two lead faculty members to coordinate the learning communities both in Math and in Human Development and supervise adjunct faculty as needed.

Cost to implement this practice (financial and human):

The cost of a 3 contact hour course for Math and the same for HDEV; either as a 20% load to FT faculty or an extra service contract for FT or adjunct faculty.

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