

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Dr. Katherine Frank, Dr. Bernadette Jungblut  
**FROM:** Developmental Work Group  
Chair: Katie Boswell  
Dr. Aaron Brown, Dr. Loretta Gray, Dr. Stuart Boersma, Katharine Whitcomb, Sharon O'Hare  
**RE:** 2018 Updates and Recommendations

During the 2017/18 academic year, the Developmental Work Group has continued to meet to address these key questions:

1. How do we define developmental education?
2. What impact does the developmental fee have on students?
3. How can we support a change to the fee structure for developmental students?
4. How will general education reform impact the Learning Commons and developmental coursework? And how can we move to co-requisite models of skills development in partnership with academic departments?
5. What improvements in developmental education have taken place this year?

### **How do we define developmental education?**

The US is in a period of substantial developmental reform. Many states have moved full-circle to define developmental education as “remediation,” thus jeopardizing funding. In fact, the course offerings supported by the Learning Commons are in danger of being re-defined as remedial because of the pre-college level designation. This creates a possible threat to the ongoing delivery of essential skills-building instruction if Washington follows suit and disallows “remediation,” as California has done. We must be aware of the national conversations regarding developmental education, and we must prepare to continue to meet student needs or our developmental students will be at much higher risk for attrition. We have agreed on a definition of developmental education at CWU that recognizes the integration of academic support into coursework, using the guiding principles of NADE.

### **What impact does the developmental fee have on students?**

Last year, we showed the impact the developmental fee has on our most disadvantaged students. It continues to be a barrier to student success. Anecdotally, advisors are sharing that **some** students are not enrolling in developmental coursework because they cannot afford the additional fee. While some students are able to have their financial aid award adjusted, many do not have that option. In a Learning Commons Advisory Board survey, multiple advisory board members remarked that elimination of the fee should be the highest priority. In data reports looking at retention and GPA for last year, we found:

- We had 120 students in the range of 0 – 2.49 GPA, yet only 27 took ENG 100T in their first year. (13 of these students were non-resident aliens without any prior GPA scores.) While we have not had time to correlate test scores, we would be very surprised if students in this GPA group didn't place into developmental English. The retention rate for this GPA group was around 55%

whether they took developmental or not, but we did not have enough of them take developmental to really give us a good picture of how developmental coursework impacts students in this GPA range.

- We had 645 students in the range of 2.5 – 2.99 GPA. 189 of these students took ENG 100T, but our expectation would be that many more students in this GPA range would have placed into developmental English.
  - Students in this GPA range had an overall retention rate of 64%.
  - Students in this GPA range who took developmental had a retention rate of 74%.
  - Students in this GPA range who did not take developmental had a retention rate of 60%.
- We had 1194 students in the range of 3.0 – 4.0. 212 of these students took developmental English.
  - Students in this GPA range had an overall retention rate of 80%.
  - Students in this GPA range who took developmental had a retention rate of 83%.
  - Students in this GPA range who did not take developmental still had a retention rate of 80%.

Source: Developmental Programs Assessment Database, CWU Institutional Effectiveness. 2009-2017.

This data raises a key question: *are students delaying their enrollment in developmental coursework because of the fee?* In answering this question, we need to look closely at how the collection of this fee impacts revenue income or loss for CWU through retention and attrition. We may be able to significantly impact overall retention rates for the university by focusing on students in our 2.25 – 2.99 GPA range.

**How can we support a change to the fee structure for developmental students?**

In order to determine how to support a change to our fee structure, we must ask:

1. What is the value of developmental coursework to students?
2. What is the value of developmental coursework to the institution?

The Workgroup recommends that if we can show a specific value or cost associated with the fee that is outside the normal instructional costs covered by tuition, it would continue to merit a fee. However, we are in agreement that the fee as it stands is too substantial a burden for developmental students and that tuition and the resulting SCH that Learning Commons generates should cover instructional costs for developmental coursework. We recommend that the fee associated with these classes be reduced to cover embedded tutoring. We do know that embedded tutoring provides a substantial value to students in terms of success. In Fall quarter 2016, we had 169 students in sections that were provided embedded tutoring in ENG 100T, and 94 students in ENG 100T sections that were not provided embedded tutoring. A comparison of the two sets of courses yielded data to show:

	With Embedded Tutoring	Without Embedded Tutoring
Retention	83%	53%
Pass Rate in ENG 101	98%	73%
On Academic Warning Following Quarter	11%	39%

Sources: CWU Course Rosters accessed via PeopleSoft correlated with Developmental Programs Assessment Database, CWU Institutional Effectiveness. 2009-2017.

While we cannot directly correlate embedded tutoring with these measures, it clearly has a large enough impact to warrant charging a fee. The appropriate fee amount would need to be studied.

We further recommend that AY 18/19 be spent examining a possible increase to the tutoring fee. An increase in this fee to cover the administrative costs of running tutoring through the Learning Commons would be charged to all students, remedying the disproportional amount that developmental students are charged, which would be a substantial improvement to supporting the access mission of the institution. The \$5 fee currently charged to all students is not sufficient to cover operations. We would need more time to determine an appropriate fee amount.

**How will general education reform impact the Learning Commons and developmental coursework? And how can we move to co-requisite models of skills development in partnership with academic departments?**

The new general education model will have a significant impact on how the Learning Commons administers developmental coursework. We will need more time to complete an impact study. On one hand, the new general education model allows us the opportunity to change the structure of developmental education and move forward with innovation in support of students, but on the other hand, the effort needed to design new curriculum and integrate support will be substantial. While academic departments have curriculum development built into faculty contracts, the Learning Commons does not operate under that structure. Perhaps, much like the way Multimodal is able to offer incentives to faculty to develop online courses, the Learning Commons could seek innovation funding to provide stipends for faculty to develop co-requisite models of developmental coursework.

As part of an external review process within the Learning Commons in April, the reviewer noted that “those with specialized knowledge and experience in the field of developmental education are best equipped to administer those services” (Dvorak, 2018). The Learning Commons continues to oversee all developmental coursework with good success, and it is therefore the recommendation of this work group that the Learning Commons continue to administer all developmental programming on campus. Research shows that centralized developmental and academic support is more functional than decentralized services. (Boylan, H.R., 2002)

Regarding the new general education program, we will need to determine which students will need developmental coursework. What measures will we have in place to determine if a student is ready for a writing intensive course, for instance? While the Learning Commons has historically worked closely with the Math and English departments to clearly define this population under our current general education model, we need to make sure to have clear guidelines going forward. We must have appropriate structures in place to support skill-development no matter what pathways a student follows in the new general education model.

## What improvements in developmental education have taken place this year?

### Placement:

Last year, we focused on several key issues regarding developmental practices at CWU. One of these is placement. This year, Learning Commons has worked closely with the Math Department, the English Department, Testing Services, Orientation, Advising, and IS to address placement issues. Notable improvements this year in regard to placement are:

1. The Math department is now accepting (and prefers) placement through ALEKS.
2. Students are required to complete Canvas modules prior to registering for Orientation. Information about placement, the Math Bridge, and access to a practice exam for ALEKS math placement are now available through the Canvas course. Students are now aware that placement testing is an essential element of orientation, and we should see increased numbers of students taking their proctored placement exams at orientation.
3. English placement scores have been updated.

### Courses:

The Learning Commons continues to make strides to improve time to gateway course for developmental coursework. Of note are the following:

#### *Math 100B LEAP Program*

- The Math LEAP Program was a small pilot program for students in Introductory Algebra (MATH 100B) who are interested in programs that require them to move along our STEM pathway to Pre-Calculus. During this program, students work with the Assistant Director of the Math Center to complete requirements that allow them to move directly from MATH 100B to MATH 153. The Learning Commons had twelve students participate in the program; eleven were successful in MATH 153, and the twelfth student chose to go into MATH 101.

#### *Math 100B Emporium LEAP*

- Using the Math 100B LEAP program as a foundation, and in response to case studies conducted at other institutions in Washington, we will pilot a section (70 seats) of MATH 100B in Shaw 217/218. Students will seek permission to enroll in this section of 100B, and seats will be limited to those seeking to score into pre-calculus (MATH 153). The instructor will use ALEKS and embedded tutors to support students in meeting currently established course outcomes. However, students will have the opportunity to retest at the end of this course for placement directly into 153, bypassing 100C if they are successful.

#### *Math Bridge*

- The Math Bridge pilot is ready for summer 2018. The goal of the bridge is to support students in moving to college-level mathematics. The students in the program will have five locations to choose from (Ellensburg, Yakima/Davis High School, Yakima/Eisenhower High School, Lynnwood, and Pierce). Students will work with tutors using the learning modules in ALEKS PPL. ALEKS PPL will provide each student with an individualized study plan from their placement test. The math bridge program will run five weeks, four days a week, for three hours a day. The traditional model will have students working in ALEKS the first and third hour each day and the second hour for small group tutoring giving students a total of 40 hours in ALEKS and 20 hours of tutoring.



For each of these new math initiatives, the Learning Commons will collect data in concordance with NADE minimum data guidelines. *There will be a budget impact if these initiatives are successful.*

Policy:

The Learning Commons has worked with Admissions, Advising, and Registrar Services regarding placing students into developmental coursework their first year. We recommend that during the next academic year, an institutional policy be enacted requiring that all students register for developmental in their first year, and that all students who are admitted under comprehensive review who place into developmental take it their first quarter. We need more time to determine how this policy will impact instruction.