Academic Transitions Program

A Recipe for a Successful Beginning

Presented by:

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May 9, 2013

Hendrick Best Practices for Adult Learners Conference

Penn State Harrisburg

WHY this pilot?

- MATH 004 & ENGL 004 phasing out
- Recognized the need
- Adult prospects admitted "rusty" skills; long time since in classroom; wanted to "brush up"
- Right Time … Right Place!
- Center for Lifelong Learning established
- Received administration commitment and financial support to try

INGREDIENTS

- Study Strategies for Classroom Success: enhance current skills and gain invaluable tips for academic success
- Succeeding in College Writing: learn how to further develop skills in order to succeed as a college writer
- Understanding Mathematics: course in arithmetic skills and the rudiments of algebra

SELECTION

- Mailings to: adult prospects in database; Summer 2012/Fall 2012 paid accepts and offers
- Flyers distributed among community by Community & Workforce Programs
- Adult Student Open House (4/11/12)
- Adults contacted Center for Adult Students to register

DETAILS

- 20 set as "ideal" number, per faculty
- Waiting list: everyone eventually moved off
- 5 cancelled
- 18 enrolled; 2 dropped
- Computer access accounts provided (guest & PSU accts)
- Certificates signed by Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs presented to participants at end of program

FORMAT

- Orientation session: 5:30 - 8:00 pm evening before 1st class. Included demo on Angel; setting up My Math Lab accounts; activating computer access accounts

- Classes: Tuesday & Thurs 5:30 - 8:00 pm (June 26 – August 9)

- 2 Study Strategies sessions: 10:00 am – 1:00 pm Saturday after classes began and Saturday before classes ended. eLion demo at 2nd session. Lunch provided at both sessions.

FORMAT (continued)

- Faculty: approached by school directors
- TA's: selected by individual faculty
- Childcare:
  - sought recommendations from Learning Resource Center, College for Kids, Nursing;
  - all had clearance training;
  - snacks & toys provided

COSTS

- FREE to all participants
- Preliminary budget drafted by Center for Adult Students (CAS) director
- Joint effort with CAS, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, and School of Science; all program costs processed through above budget
- See Expense Summary.

Expense Summary

ATP SU12 EXPENSE SUMMARY						
Textbooks	$2,271.98					
AWL*Prentice Hall						
Postage-return unused books	$12.47					
Staples						
Binders, paper, pens, pencils	$59.33					
Copy Center						
Program Direction Signs	$20.00					
Tutoring Expenses						
Eric - English - 11.5 hrs. @ $8.50/hr.	$97.75					
Jeff - Math - 16.5 hrs. @ $8.50/hr.	$140.25					
Total Tutoring Expense	$238.00					
Wage Payroll		6/7-6/30	7/1-7/14	7/15-7/28	7/29-8/11	
Child Care $7.25/hr.	$224.75	$50.75	$43.50	$65.25	$65.25	
OT-Unaware above worked 40 hrs. @ Coll. 4 Kids	$50.36			$50.36		
Childcare Supplies						
Toys & Food	$65.96					
Flash Drives						
Lunch for Study Sessions (2)						
Session 1 - 6/30/12	$40.64					
Session 2 - 8/4/12	$157.50					
Faculty Salaries	$7,000.00					
TOTAL INCLUDING WAGES	$10,378.99					
Credits						
Textbook Returns	$628.25					
Total books returned - 7						
Childcare Supplies						
Returned items not needed	$27.64					
TOTAL CREDITS	$655.89					

Study Strategies for Classroom Success

- High school study skills at best…dated, at worst…non-existent
- Need to know how to study effectively for college-level work
- Identify learning style
- Develop strategies that capitalize on learning style

Study Strategies for Classroom Success

- Exercises and discussion to determine whether auditory, kinesthetic, or visual learner
- Strategies delivery: both face-to-face and on-line self-paced components
- ANGEL study group set up to work on selected *iStudy for Success* modules, including quiz and practice components
- Modules chosen provided overview of those skills necessary to be successful

Study Strategies for Classroom Success

Istudy for Success Modules

- Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, Copyright
- Active Listening
- Active Reading
- Brainstorming
- Concept Maps
- Cooperative Learning
- Learning Online – Are you Ready?

Study Strategies for Classroom Success

Istudy for Success Modules

- Note taking
- Oral Presentations
- Problem Solving
- Planning your Time with Gantt Charts
- Stress Management
- Test Anxiety
- Testing and Assessments
- Time Management

Study Strategies for Classroom Success

- What we learned from our ATP students
  - Informal evaluation of program
  - Surprising element of social gratification

Succeeding in College Writing:
Key Skills Taught

- Understanding the expectations of college writing (what teachers want from you)
- Developing a thesis (main idea)
- Supporting what you say using evidence accepted in college
- Using technology to do outside research
- Citation (formatting outside sources correctly)
- Organization
- Grammar concerns

Succeeding in College Writing:
Rationale

- Surveyed faculty for skills desired (and often lacking) in college freshmen
- Recognition of centrality of technology to the college experience ~ often an area of discomfort for returning/non-traditional students
- Room for student-guided study (students voted on the grammar issues they wanted to work on and lessons tailored appropriately)

Succeeding in College Writing:
Class Methodology

- First hour: Lesson
  - Discussion of sample Penn State Behrend assignments across the curriculum modeling the lesson (example: how to write a thesis)
  - Structured discussion of best practices
- Second hour: Application
  - Model assignment given
  - Students worked in adjacent computer lab at their own pace
- Final half-hour: Optional grammar/style drill
  - Students designed the topic (example: "how to use a comma correctly")
  - Given the option each week of the private half-hour lesson OR could continue work in lab under T.A. supervision

Succeeding in College Writing:
Outcomes

- Extensive *practice* and comfort level with writing
- Clear expectations for college-level academic prose, both in terms of:
  - Having a clear argument supported with carefully chosen evidence
  - Correct grammar & stylistics
- Understanding that "college writing" is not synonymous with "English" or "Literature." It is *cross-disciplinary*, and standards for professional writing across fields have much in common.

Succeeding in College Writing:
Feedback

- Generally very positive – students appreciated opportunity to:
  - Move at own pace
  - Receive feedback in a non-pressured atmosphere
  - Practice essays for "the real thing" in college
  - Tour the library and learn basic databases they will use

- ESL students had difficulties – our program was not set up to accommodate individuals with very minimal English skills.

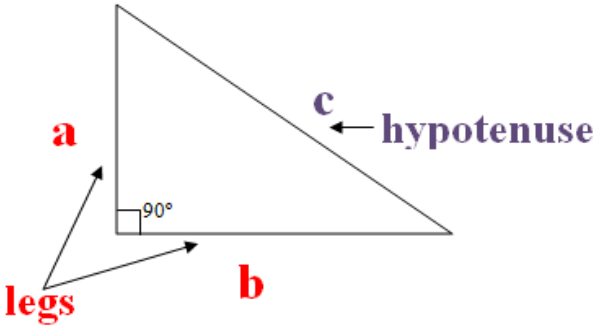
- Students did not take advantage of T.A.'s help/skills

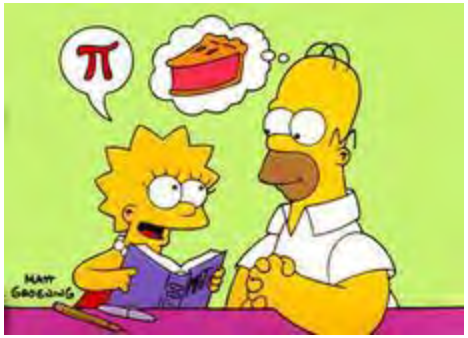
Succeeding in College Writing:
Future Recommendations

- Development of separate summer E.S.L. program for students with minimal knowledge of English.

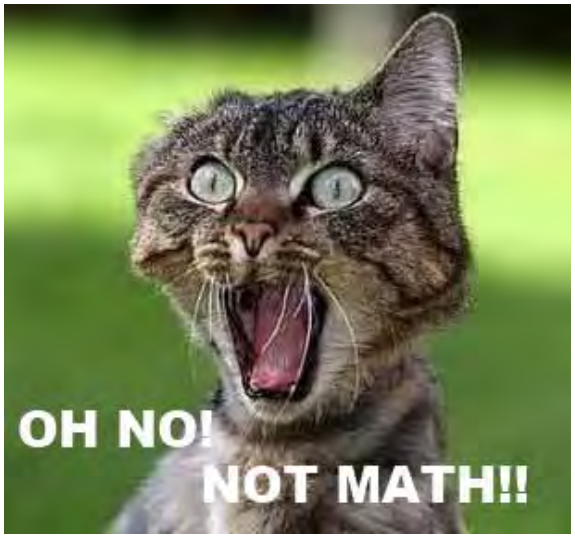
- Continue to refine program with student feedback and add in skills/assignments they would like to see.

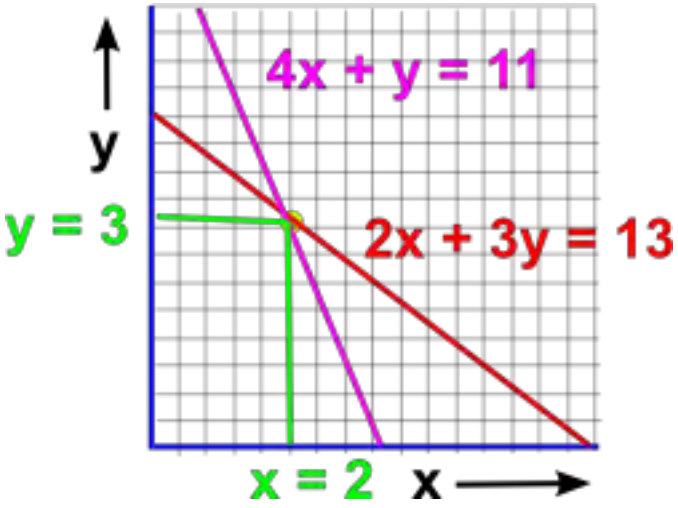
Understanding Mathematics





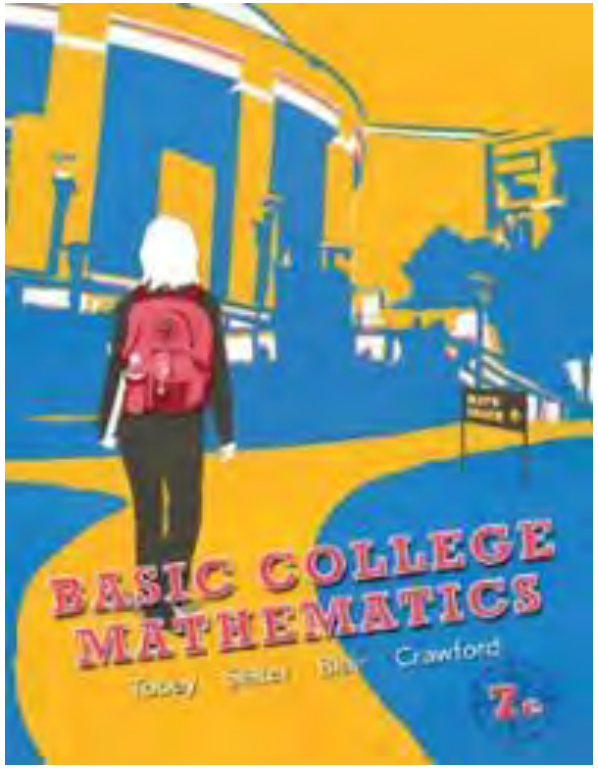
$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$





Understanding Mathematics:
Text

Basic College Mathematics, 7th edition, Tobey, Slater, Blair, Crawford, Pearson Education, Inc., 2012.



MyMathLab®

Understanding Mathematics:
Curriculum

- Whole Numbers
- Fractions
- Decimals
- Basic Statistics
- Ratio and Proportions
- Percents
- Geometry
- Signed Numbers
- Scientific Notation
- Basic Algebra

- MATH 004
- MATH 021
- MATH 081

Understanding Mathematics:
Class Structure

- Reviewed any homework questions.
- Presented lesson using PowerPoint.
- Allowed students to start homework.
- Students worked with instructor or TA.

Understanding Mathematics:
Assessments

- One mid-term covering whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and basic statistics.
- One cumulative final exam.
- Weekly MML homework due.
- Weekly MML practice exams due.
- Passing score set at 80% per assignment.
- Must do in order and can't proceed until 80% passing score is achieved.

Understanding Mathematics:
Grading Policy

- Mid-term counts for 25% of grade.
- Passing score of 75% or better.
- If less than 75%, students must complete intervention assignment.
- Final exam counts for 25% of grade.
- All MML assignments count for 50% of grade.
- 75% or higher overall grade is passing.
- 0% - 74% overall is a failing grade.

Understanding Mathematics:
Calculator Policy

- Basic calculator was allowed for MML assignments.
- No calculators allowed for in class mid-term and final exam.

Understanding Mathematics:
Attendance Policy

- Attendance was taken.
- Done to show we care.
- Allowed two absences, otherwise failing grade would result.

Understanding Mathematics:
Course Student Learning Outcomes

- Students should be able to correctly compute a variety of operations involving real numbers in a number of different formats, including the correct usage of the order of operations.
- Students should be able to correctly convert between a variety of real number types and formats.
- Students should be able to make estimates and to check the reasonableness of solutions to calculations and problems involving real numbers.
- Students should be able to solve applied word problems, including correctly setting up problems and translating between words, algebraic expressions, and equations.

Understanding Mathematics:
General Education Learning Outcomes

- Communication skills - Student will be able to write, read, listen, and speak critically and effectively using the language of mathematics.
- Quantitative Reasoning - Students will be able to use quantitative skills and the concepts and methods of mathematics to solve problems.
- Information & Technology Literacy - Students will be able to collect, evaluate, and interpret information and effectively use information technologies.

Understanding Mathematics:
Mid-Term Intervention

- Designed for students who did not pass the mid-term with 75% or higher.
- Additional assignments on MML.
- Review of study plan of each pencil icon.

Understanding Mathematics

Student	Mid-Term	Final Exam
1	35	0
2	90	76
3	92.5	76
4	95	82
5	82.5	80
6	85	74
7	95	86
8	90	0
9	0	0
10	95	92
11	40	32
12	85	86
13	90	0
14	0	0
15	80	90
16	87.5	83
17	70	50
18	90	94
Average	81.40625	77

Understanding Mathematics:
After Final Exam

- Met with each student to discuss and recommend next mathematics class: Math 004, 021, or 081.
- Good and positive feedback about the class.
- EVERY student said they would recommend the class to friends and family.
- Some asked to extend MML assignments to use as a reference for fall/spring semesters.

Understanding Mathematics

Personal Comments

Measured Results

		FALL 2012 Grades		(5 students did not enroll Fall 2012; 1 enrolled but not in English or Math)			
Student	ENGL 004	ENGL 015	MATH 004	MATH 021		MATH 081	
1						B-	
2						B+	
3		A-		D			
4			C				
5		A					
6		A-				B	
7	B		B+				
8		A		C			
9						B	
10		A					
		SPRING 2013 Grades		(5 students did not enroll Spring 2013; 2 enrolled but not in English or Math)			
Student	ENGL 004	ENGL 015	MATH 004	MATH 021	MATH 022	MATH 081	MATH 082
1							C
2							C+
3					D		
4		A-		D			
5				dropped			
6							B-
7				A			
8	(enrolled but	not in English	or Math)				
9		A					C
10				dropped			

Survey Results (n=7)

- Writing component helped to strengthen writing & English skills…….. 57 %
- Mathematics component helped to strengthen mathematics skills … 71%
- Recommend ATP to other adult students … 100%

Thank you!

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