Writing in the End Zone

Creating a Reality of Success for Student-Athletes

Community College League of California
Thursday, November 22, 2013

James Carranza     Teeka James     Jon Kitamura
Bret Pollack      Anne Stafford     Tim Tulloch
The Problem

- African American and Pacific Islander male students, under 22, were the lowest achieving students on campus.

- They arrived at CSM with poor reading, writing, and study skills and immediately faced English and transfer-level courses without support.
The Concept

- Create a learning community to address the problem and ensure success

- Why football?
  African American and Pacific Islander males make up just over 80% of CSM’s football team.
The Basics

- Create a positive, dynamic learning environment
- Use culturally relevant, sports related material, initially
- Focus on process and applied skills
Teamwork and Collaboration
Teamwork and Collaboration
The Structure

English Composition/Reading and Athletic Course Combinations

Fall Semester: Developmental Composition
• ENGL 838 + VARS 220: Weight Conditioning

Spring Semester: Transfer-level, 1A
• ENGL 100 + VARS 130: Varsity Football
Who are our Students?

Linebacker - Andre Portis
The First Writing Assignment
ENGL 828

NAME: ANDRE PORTIS

QUESTION: Write an essay in which you explain why you are going to college. Use specific examples and details to clearly explain your reasoning to your reader. This essay should be well-organized and reflect your best writing skills.
The reason I am in college is to play football that is my dream and also my life I love the game and if it was not for football I do not no what I would be doing right now football keeps my head on my shoulders and keep me out of trouble. I first started to play football in OHIO because of my cozens they got me in to it and I am happy they did since I started I have never looked back.

I think with me gowing to college and also playing football I will have a lot of choices in my life and I plan to make the best of them. My mom always tolled me to never say u can't do something and I plan to never say I can't do something if u put your mind to it u will make it.”
Support System

- Instructors and coaches/advisors share a unified vision of academic and athletic achievement.
- Instructors and coaches/advisors communicate regularly.
- Administrators acknowledge and support WEZ.
The Objective: Academic Acculturation

- Facilitate the transformation from athlete-student to student-athlete
- Acknowledge challenges that student-athletes face
- Encourage student-athletes to recognize that they belong in the academy
Where it Begins…

- Expresses Happiness Basics through life
- Living is a metaphor for Happiness
- "Have Nothing, You are Nothing"
- Leaving the flower represents over the work
- Appreciation for life
- Love to be appreciated by all

"He doesn't want to take it. Leave that alone."

"You are everything. What gives!"

"The art of life."

"The art of life."

"We can be anything. What gives!"

"The art of life."

"We can be anything. What gives!"
The Objective, cont.

- Provide opportunities for these students to have a “voice” in the academy
- Create assignments, initially, that enable student-athletes to draw upon personal knowledge and expertise
- Develop productive academic “habits” in concert with reading, writing, and critical thinking skills
Ownership of Achievement

- Use a holistic, community approach via “The Bulldog Family”: student-athletes, coaches, and faculty join in a common purpose.

- Connect students’ performance on the field and in the classroom

- Develop students’ pride in their academic work
Transformation from Athlete to . . .

Student-Athlete

- Academic and athletic achievement
- Successful transfers to four-year institutions
- Athletic scholarships
# WEZ 838 Success and Withdrawals

Composition and Reading, One Level Below Transfer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGL 838 One Level Below Transfer</th>
<th>WEZ 838 Fall 04 – Spring 13 (n=158)</th>
<th>Pre-WEZ 838 Fall 1996 – Spring 04 (n=205)</th>
<th>CSM 838 Fall 04 – Spring 12 (n=2,856)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIRST ATTEMPT SUCCESS</strong></td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL SUCCESS</strong></td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUCCESS &lt; 22 YEARS</strong></td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
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</table>
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Composition and Reading, One Level Below Transfer

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFRICAN AMERICAN SUCCESS</td>
<td>71.8% (51)</td>
<td>44.4% (40)</td>
<td>44.1% (86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACIFIC ISLANDER SUCCESS</td>
<td>69% (40)</td>
<td>42.6% (26)</td>
<td>53.8% (84)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## WEZ 838 Success and Withdrawals

### Composition and Reading, One Level Below Transfer

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL WITHDRAWALS</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFRICAN AMERICAN WITHDRAWALS</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACIFIC ISLANDER WITHDRAWALS</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## WEZ 838 Success and Withdrawals
Composition and Reading, One Level Below Transfer

| Af Am  
African American  
Pac Isl  
Pacific Islander | WEZ 838  
Fall 04 – Spring 12  
(n=158) | Pre-WEZ 838  
Fall 1996 – Spring 04  
(n=205) | CSM 838  
Fall 04 – Spring 12  
(n=2,856) |
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<td>FIRST ATTEMPT</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SUCCESS</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 22 SUCCESS</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
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<td>53.8% (84)</td>
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<td>TOTAL W’S &lt; 22</td>
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<td>19.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>AF AM W’S</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC ISL W’S</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
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## WEZ 100 Success and Withdrawals
### Transfer Composition and Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Af Am</th>
<th>Af Am</th>
<th>Pre-WEZ 100</th>
<th>CSM 100</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Fall 04 – Spring 12 (n=120)</td>
<td>Fall 1996 – Spring 04 (n=218)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Af Am</td>
<td>Pac Isl</td>
<td>Pac Isl</td>
<td>Pac Isl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIRST ATTEMPT</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SUCCESS</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 22 SUCCESS</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF AM SUCCESS</td>
<td>73.2% (41)</td>
<td>48.8% (41)</td>
<td>52.2% (235)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC ISL SUCCESS</td>
<td>75.8% (25)</td>
<td>46.8% (22)</td>
<td>49.3% (199)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL W'S &lt; 22</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AF AM W'S</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC ISL W'S</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
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## Athletic Snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WIN/LOSS RECORD</strong></td>
<td>7-year losing streak</td>
<td>11-year winning streak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STATE/NATIONAL RANKINGS</strong></td>
<td>C program; no ranking</td>
<td>Top 15 annually 2009 State title game loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOLARSHIPS</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21 ($1.5 million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong># OF STUDENT-ATHLETES</strong></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Academic Snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEAM GPA (CORE COURSES)</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COURSE COMPLETION (A, B, C, D)</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.A. DEGREES</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID-YEAR TRANSFERS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implementation

- Daily attendance checks
- Football coaches as academic advisors
- Highly structured and coordinated grayshirt program
- Regimented study skills program
- Collaboration with faculty — WEZ
Recent Transfers

Arizona State
Cal Poly
Colorado State
Kansas State
Louisiana State University

Menlo College
Marshall University
Northern Arizona
Oregon State
Portland State
San Jose State
Southeastern Louisiana
Texas College
UC Berkeley
University of Hawaii
University of Oregon
University of Massachusetts
University of Southern California
Washington State
[Coelho writes,] “We are afraid of losing what we have, whether it’s our life possessions or property. But the fear evaporates when we understand that our life stories and the history of the world are written by the same hand” (76). As we live life we gain valuable memories and relationships, but when bad things happen, we try to protect what we cherish the most. Santiago experiences this with Fatima, the desert girl, the girl who convinced him to leave and return after finding his treasure. To Santiago, Fatima is his treasure because she has taught him what it means to be in love. Going through life we experience tragic times and events that change our outlook and perspective, but it is also these events that teach us how to become stronger mentally and physically.
Remember Andre and *our* students like him

- Mid-year transfer to Marshall University
- Full-ride scholarship
Any Questions?

For further information or if you would like a copy of this presentation, please contact us: Bret Pollack, pollack@smccd.edu
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James Carranza, carranza@smccd.edu