Morgan Community College

Case Study Report – Data as of May 2013

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Released December 2013

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Education and Employment
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December 2013

INTRODUCTION

In 2011, Colorado received a $17.3 million Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The grant-funded project, the Colorado Online Energy Training Consortium (COETC)—has two principal purposes: 1) enhance the state's energy-related programming by transforming curricula into more accessible formats using technology and mobile learning labs, and 2) develop and implement a redesign of the state's developmental education (DE) program. Project goals include expanding access to degree and certificate programs in energy-related fields; increasing retention and completion of certificate and degree programs at the community college level; and developing a trained workforce for changing job market.

The COETC project involves the thirteen colleges in the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) and two local district colleges, Aims Community College (Aims CC) and Colorado Mountain College (CMC).

CCCS contracted with Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations ("Rutgers") to be the COETC third-party evaluator. In this role, the Rutgers team created and implemented a multi-faceted research assessment design that includes quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.

A major component of Rutgers' COETC evaluation is a cohort study that compares the educational outcomes for students enrolled in traditional courses to those for students enrolled in COETC developed and funded courses. In particular, this research focuses on the COETC's second goal as described above. The study's objective is to assess the success of DE courses restructured under the guidelines of the Colorado State Task Force on Developmental Education Redesigns (State Task Force) and the success of the redesigned energy courses at the seven participating energy colleges. Specifically, it will evaluate the impact of factors such as demographics, Accuplacer scores, course registrations, student grades, employment status, and wages on rates of retention, program completion, and employment after graduation. The methodology consists of quantitative analyses of student and course data from Fall 2011 through Spring 2014 along with qualitative analyses of student experiences.

Toward the end of the Spring 2013 semester, Rutgers distributed four reports covering the study data collected to date from individual colleges and the consortium as a whole: "Integrated Year End Report," Career Coach Caseloads Analysis," "Redesigned Course Outcomes," and "Master Course List." This case study provides an interim report, based on data provided in these reports, on the progress to date of Morgan Community College (MCC) under the COETC grant as of May 2013.

The sections that follow 1) outline the overall study methodology and data sources, 2) provide background information on MCC and its student population, 3) summarize the goals and primary elements of MCC's COETC program, 4) describe the redesigned DE courses (math and

English/reading) and present data on enrollment and outcomes, 5) assess the success of the career coaching program instituted by MCC as part of its COETC program, and 6) conclude with recommendations for MCC specifically and for the consortium colleges in general with regard to their COETC-funded programs.

METHODOLOGY/DATA SOURCES

Quantitative Analysis

During the first project year, Rutgers worked closely with CCCS to refine the quarterly reports required from each of the system's participating colleges. Rutgers has used data from these reports to track progress and to provide the foundation for other data collection. In collaboration with CCCS, the district colleges, and college career coaches, Rutgers' developed and revised an Electronic Student Case File (ESCF) to capture data relating to the COETC career coaches' work with grant-eligible students. (The ESCF records demographic and academic information and tracks the issues and goals coaches and students work on and any referrals made.) In addition, Rutgers designed a pre-course survey to collect information on student expectations about course work and career goals. The colleges administered this survey to students in traditional and redesigned DE courses in Fall of 2012.

The Rutgers team has also been working closely with CCCS and the district colleges to access the Banner student system (and CMC's data system) to track student progress and achievement and to collect and analyze data for the cohort study.

Qualitative Analysis

Rutgers' qualitative evaluation focuses on COETC process issues and the experiences of project team members and participating students, faculty, and staff at the 15 colleges in the COETC consortium.

Methods have included document reviews and content analysis of text answers on the quarterly reports; the Electronic Student Case File (ESCFs, surveys, e.g. pre-course survey results, and materials and websites developed by the State Task Force, CCCS, and/or individual colleges. Rutgers team members have conducted phone and in-person interviews with project leads, faculty involved in the restructuring and/or teaching of DE and energy courses, instructional designers, data coordinators, senior college administrators, and, whenever possible, students. They conducted on-site interviews at CCA on January 29 and 30, 2013. The team members have analyzed transcriptions of phone and in-person interviews to identify program achievements to date, best practices, and critical issues for follow-up. Some of the responses from these interviews are quoted in this report.

Rutgers team members have also participated in conference calls with project leads and career coaches and joined in webinars. In addition, they have observed and participated in forums sponsored by CCCS, such as sessions on DE redesigns.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MCC

Morgan Community College (MCC) is a non-residential college located in Fort Morgan, Colorado, the county seat of Morgan County and a city of 11,000 people. With a service area of 11,000 square miles, MCC also has satellite centers in Bennett, Burlington, Limon, and Wray, covering a total of six counties in Northeast Colorado. MCC provides education in a traditional classroom setting, through synchronous interactive video system and through online distance learning. MCC prides itself on the student populations' high retention levels (see below). MCC offers Associate's degrees in which students can proceed directly into their desired career paths or transfer to four-year institutions. MCC also offers a variety of certificate programs with lengths ranging from one semester to one year.

In 2012, 2,620 students attended MCC. At 97.4 percent, MCC has the highest percentage of students who are in-area residents among CCCS colleges. MCC also has the highest proportion of female students relative to other CCCS colleges at 67.3 percent. MCC's retention rate of its remedial education students is high: 62.1 percent compared to the state average of 49.6 percent. MCC also graduates 29 percent of students, which is higher than the state community college average of 18.9 percent.

MCC's COETC GOALS AND PRIMARY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The goal of the MCC's redesign was to reduce the time to completion for students' DE requirements. As such, MCC redesigned its DE courses in English/reading and math to better serve its population of non-traditional students. Recognizing non-traditional students' changing schedules (many students are involved in shiftwork jobs where schedules change weekly), MCC also decided to extend the hours of the tutorial center. To effect this change of schedule, MCC hired qualified faculty and tutors, increasing both student access to tutoring services and the flexibility to get help with their DE coursework.

Recognizing non-academic issues that often affect student success, MCC also proposed a program of professional development for faculty and staff, focusing on the material conditions and related challenges its students face outside of the classroom. MCC selected a trained professional to provide a workshop based on the book, *Bridges Out of Poverty,* authored by Dr. Ruby K. Payne. The grant provided funds for MCC to hire a career coach to help lead students through the employment process, using the model presented in the book *Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin' By World* by Philip DeVol.

MCC's REDESIGNED DE PROGRAM

MCC's overall intention with redesigning the DE curriculum is that students learn mathematics and English/reading foundational skills in an environment that allows self-paced work with the option of acceleration. Through the expanded services of the tutorial center, MCC anticipated that larger numbers of local workers with inconsistent schedules would take advantage of MCC's DE courses and/or increase their utilization of the tutorial center.

ENGLISH **/ READING REDESIGN**

As mentioned above, five English and reading courses were redesigned to initiate the process towards MCC's larger goals of expanding DE delivery and more effectively providing students with foundational skill sets in a timely manner with scheduling flexibility.

English/Reading Redesign: Innovative Models and Practices

To better serve students in developmental English and reading, MCC has piloted different methods of helping students move more efficiently through the DE sequence to reduce time to completion. MCC faculty and staff are working through different methods, from technology to tutoring, to assist students in building foundational developmental skills.

Pearson's My Writing Lab: English faculty implemented the online-based My Writing Lab for the 060 and 090 levels, allowing students to earn additional points toward their overall grade. My Writing Lab focuses on supplemental skills such as mechanics and grammar. The English instructor found that allowing students to complete this work during free time worked better for the 090 class than with the 060 students. To continue with the My Writing Lab, the MCC's English instructor brought students weekly to the computer lab, providing in-class time to complete the exercises and assignments. She finds that the 060 students have improved in their writing and attributes that to the supervised class time allowed to complete these supplemental exercises.

Synchronous Registration for English 090 and 121: For the Spring 2013 semester, MCC allowed students to synchronously register for English 090 and English 121. Not all students are enrolled in both classes, but for those who are, the rapport within the classroom is very good because many of these students go from the 090 to the 121 together and have developed a solid group dynamic. Students taking both of these courses together have opportunity to develop strong relationships which have increased participation during each class. Students are more likely to participate and offer answers because of their increased comfort level. Additionally, by using this acceleration model, students are able to complete their English DE requirements while also earning college credit for the 121 level. This model parallels to some degree the State DE Task Force's new Studio D and Studio 121 options.

Tutoring Services for English Coursework: With funds from the TAACCCT grant, MCC has been able to staff a student services tutoring center with one faculty member and peer-tutors to assist DE students with their foundational skills. English students often visit the tutoring lab for assistance with writing assignments. Tutors are instructed not to act as if they are grading papers but to help guide students and provide suggestions for improvement.

English/Reading Redesign: Challenges

Issues with Technology: Faculty reported that students ran into problems dealing with added technology for the My Writing Lab. The English instructor eventually decided to have the 060 level class do the My Writing Lab supplemental skill work during in-class computer lab time because of the issues students were having logging in, remembering passwords, and having overall computer access outside of the college. The instructor feels that the supplemental mechanical and grammar work available in the My Writing Lab is beneficial to the students but has experienced many challenges in having the students take advantage of the program. As an option to students who are uncomfortable with the program, the instructor allowed students to complete all of the exercises at the end of each chapter in their textbook instead of using the My Writing Lab.

MATH REDESIGN

Statewide, during the 2011-12 academic year 60.1 percent of students enrolled in DE courses were enrolled in a math course (46,913) as compared to only 25.9 percent in English (20,243) and 13.1 percent in reading (10,877)[1]. It has been a challenge for colleges to meet the high volume of students requiring one or more developmental math courses while identifying methods that encourage successful progress through the developmental pathway.

The State Task Force determined that liberal arts and algebra pathways require different levels of math proficiency. As such they separated developmental math into two pathways: one for students interested in pursuing degrees and careers dependent on higher-level math proficiency, and one for students interested in degrees or fields that are not algebra or calculus based.

As an initial step to the mandatory curriculum redesign, MCC restructured three courses: Compressed Pre-Algebra w/ Basic Math (MAT 045), Intermediate Algebra (MAT 099), and Introductory Algebra (MAT 090).

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[1] See CCCS (2010). Academic Year 2011-12 Remedial Enrollment and Course Completion Rates.
    http://www.cccs.edu/Docs/Research/AY2012RemedialEnrollmentandCompletion.pdf

Math Redesign: Innovative Models and Practices

MCC's math faculty has developed further strategies to aid students in progressing through the DE requirements in a more effective way.

Manipulative Objects: MCC's math faculty purchased different manipulative objects such as blocks, games, dice, and diagrams. With this method of teaching, students are able to better understand and apply the concepts in the curriculum rather than following direct instruction. During the onsite visit, it was observed that students use varying types of objects such as wheels and colored blocks to understand concepts such as fractions and percentages. Students are responding well to this method as they can apply what they are learning in the chapter. The math instructor shared that "We talk a lot about interest rates and things like that, that are meaningful to them. We talk about negative bank accounts and we talk about integers. So we try to make them, like, have some emotional attachment to the numbers."

Developing the Math 045 Class: MCC faculty observed that the Math 045 course benefits both students at the 030 level and those at the 060 level. They have found that students who place into 030 often do not actually need a full semester at that level. In 045, these students have the opportunity to review fundamental skills and then accelerate and move forward with 060 content. Students who place into the 060 level do not necessarily have all the skills for that level. Math 045 allows them to refresh their skills with the 030 coursework and then move onto the 060-level concepts. Faculty noted that 045 serves a wider range of developmental needs and helps students progress rapidly in one semester.

Tutoring Lab: As mentioned above, expanded staffing and hours of the tutoring lab are now available to DE math students. Located near the classrooms, faculty find students go directly into the tutoring lab after the end of a lesson to get help with sample problems and concepts learned in the class. Students are able to have one-on-one instruction with a tutor, as well as sometimes working in groups with two or three other students working on the same concepts.

Increased Student-to-Student Interaction: During onsite interviews, students reported that the math professor's use of collaborative techniques helps them to learn the material. It creates an atmosphere where the students felt "more comfortable to listen to people." The students also stated that they would be more likely to take further math classes if a similar teaching style were implemented, and that they may refrain from taking math classes if a different professor, employing a different style, were assigned to the course.

Math Redesign: Challenges

Math faculty are concerned with the perception of the "acceleration" model in that the purpose should not necessarily be to get students through DE "faster" if they are unable to grasp the important concepts that are being taught. One faculty member shared her concern: "My fear is that students will be pushed through quickly. I won't be able to teach them…the deep

understanding. In their course, they won't succeed because they didn't have the time to ingest the math."

REDESIGNED DE COURSE ENROLLMENT AND OUTCOMES

To determine the ongoing effects of redesigned courses occurring through the COETC grant, project leads reported to the Rutgers team information about their redesigned course and the modality used by developmental education.

The number of redesigned DE courses totaled eight unique course offerings and 24 unique section offerings through Spring 2013. Half of all courses have been offered during the Spring 2013 term. Table 1 displays the rollout of these course offerings by term as well as the percentage and number of total students served by these courses (358 students).

Table 1: Number of MCC Students Enrolled in DE Redesigned Courses by Term		
Term & Year	**Percent of Total Redesigned DE Population (All Subjects)**	**N (Redesigned DE Population)**
Spring 2012	9.2	33
Summer 2012	3.1	11
Fall 2012	37.7	135
Spring 2013	50.0	179
Total	100.0	358

In terms of overall student retention, 89.1 percent of students (319) who registered for redesigned DE courses persisted in the course, while 3.9 percent (14) dropped the course during the add/drop period and 7.0 percent (25) withdrew after the start of the term.

Table 2 presents the number of students enrolled in redesigned DE by subject. At MCC, over half (57 percent) of all enrollment in redesigned DE courses were students in math courses, followed by English (26.8 percent) and reading (15.9 percent).

Table 2: Enrollments in MCC DE Redesigned Courses Offerings by Subject		
Subject	**Percent of Total Redesigned DE Population (All Terms)**	**N (Redesigned DE Population)**
English	26.8	96
Reading	15.9	57
Math	57.3	205
Total	100	358

Tables 3 shows the number of students at MCC enrolled in redesigned DE by course title.

Table 3: : Enrollment in MCC DE Redesigned Course Offerings by Course Title		
Course Title	Percent of Total Redesigned DE Population (All Terms)	N (Redesigned DE Population)
Basic Composition	14.8	53
College Preparatory Reading	10.9	39
Writing Fundamentals	7.0	25
English Composition I: CO1	5.0	18
Foundations of Reading	5.0	18
Compress Pre Alg w/Basic Math	38.3	137
Intermediate Algebra	8.7	31
Introductory Algebra	10.3	37
Total	100	358

Table 4 presents the mean of grades for each individual DE redesigned course. In the months ahead, the Rutgers team will do further analysis of means, comparing section means to departmental means.

Table 4: MCC Academic Outcomes for Redesigned DE Courses	
Course Title	Course Mean Grade (All Terms and Redesigned Sections Combined)
Basic Composition	2.1333
College Preparatory Reading	2.3889
Writing Fundamentals	2.0455
English Composition I: CO1	2.5000
Foundations of Reading	2.9333
Intermediate Algebra	2.4815
Introductory Algebra	2.5313
Compress Pre Alg w/Basic Math	2.3333

MCC'S COETC CAREER COACH PROGRAM

Across the COETC consortium, the career coach position was established to facilitate students' access to careers in the energy sector and to assist students with any non-academic issues that inhibit their progress or ability to successfully complete a course of study. Coach functions were envisioned to include career counseling and referrals, academic advising as it related to career choices, and counseling and referrals for a wide range of social and financial support services. To conform to the intent of COETC, eligibility for career coach services requires that a student

meet one or more of the following characteristics: participation in a redesigned DE course or a TAACCCT-supported energy course/program, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)-eligibile/like, unemployment, and/or other U.S. Department of Labor program eligibility.

MCC's Career Coach's background is in business and education. After a career in private industry, she taught business at a local high school. She understands the ins and outs of the public education system and is familiar with the Fort Morgan area. Additionally, MCC's Career Coach returned to college as a non-traditional student and feels that she understands many of the obstacles and hardships that students face in trying to complete their educational goals while dealing with other life issues.[2]

The career coach position at MCC was designed to primarily serve DE students. While the position title is "career coach," she feels that she is more of a "student success advisor." This model exists at MCC for the health occupations programs, where the advisor mainly helps students with non-academic issues that may interfere with their educational success. MCC's leadership was satisfied with the way this advising position helped students in the health-related programs and decided that having the DE career coach perform a similar role would provide benefits. MCC's advising department agreed that it has been a new paradigm for DE students to have access to a career coach who solely helps them manage obstacles and achieve their goals.

Initially, MCC's first Career Coach set up times to visit every DE class and gave a short presentation to the students. She also had students fill out a basic information sheet during the visit. While the instructor continued with the planned lesson, the career coach walked around with an appointment book and scheduled a meeting with every student in the class. From that method, about 60 percent of the students showed up for their appointments. Using the same presentation idea in Fall 2012, she continued to have a positive response to scheduling appointments. But although the instructors did not complain, the career coach started to feel that she was taking up too much class time. So rather than schedule individual appointments, in Spring 2013 she left a schedule and business cards for students to sign up to meet with her on their own initiative. She noticed less success with this method of recruitment than with the individual appointment setup. As an additional recruitment method, the DE English instructor gives students extra credit for scheduling a meeting with the career coach.

As other coaches in the grant project have noted, students typically come into the career coach's office when they have a problem. From personal issues to career advice, the career coach is available to help students overcome the barriers that may prevent the completion of their educational goals.

MCC's career coach also helps students arrange their academic schedules and focus on their degree or certificate requirement and choosing appropriate pathways. The career coach also

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[2] Since this report was drafted a new coach has taken over at MCC. This change will be discussed in future Rutgers reports.

asks students about their experience with the online education portions of some coursework. For example, she will often suggest a computer class if a student is struggling with the required technology.

Most students have a general idea of what their long-term goals are. As students revisit the career coach, they develop a relationship and feel more comfortable stopping in with questions during the school year. To further her reach, the career coach has also started to visit classes throughout the year so that students are accustomed to her presence around the college. As other career coaches have discovered, relationship building with students is an important and integral part of increasing caseload.

MCC's career coach is familiar with the Fort Morgan area and is aware of the resources available for students outside of the classroom. For example, one student was ineligible for the nursing program at MCC but had indicated her second choice was counseling. The career coach reached out to a local mental health facility and set up a meeting with the student and the facility's staff to further discuss the student's alternate career plan in counseling. The student was able to gain confidence about counseling as a career option and quickly make necessary changes to her course plan.

Additionally, the career coach established a formal relationship with the Eastern Workforce Center in order to better track referrals and the services a client receives. She also reached out to local employers – both within and outside the energy sector – to find out what they were looking for in terms of potential future employees.

MCC's career coach has also put effort into learning about each of the available energy programs at Aims, Front Range, and Red Rocks Community Colleges. At the start of the grant, the intention was to refer students in the Fort Morgan area to the online versions of these energy programs. She scheduled meetings with area employers to learn about their workforce needs in the energy fields. Most of these programs do not have full online capabilities yet. The career coach remains informed about their progress toward distance and hybrid learning. As a start, Red Rocks Community College visited the Fort Morgan area for a water quality course to test out their new mobile learning lab. This visit occurred following the timeframe of this report but will be reported on in later Rutgers reports.

As with nearly all the colleges in the grant, the career coach's role and how it fits into the larger institutional counseling environment is not clear to all involved actors. The career coach reported that her supervisor in the counseling office, while generally helpful and supportive, does not always understand her position in relation to the rest of the office. In fact, the career coach's office has not been integrated physically into the space occupied by the other counseling services available at MCC, creating the feeling that she is "not really" part of the school's counseling services. It should be noted that the Career Coach's office location was based on two important factors. The first was the limited availability of space (there were no vacant offices in

Student Services); and, availability of privacy for conversations between students and the Career Coach.

Electronic Student Case File

The ESCF was developed to capture the work of the career coaches and to track students' progress with their goals. It was hoped that data from the ESCF would contribute to an understanding of student challenges and best intervention practices, as well as the impact of coaching services on student rates of retention and completion. The ESCF includes demographic and academic information, the issues and goals on which the coach and student work, and any referrals made.

Coaches open up an ESCF for each eligible student with whom they meet, adding additional information for subsequent visits and interactions. Of the students registered by MCC's career coach, 45 percent (102) have an active ESCF file. For the remaining 55 percent of students (126), there is no active ESCF as of May 23, 2013.[3]

Career Coach Registration Targets

At MCC, the target number of students to be served by the career coach under the grant is 82. Thus far, the total number of students registered by the career coach is 228. This represents approximately 278 percent of the number of students (82) expected to be served by the career coach under the grant.[4]

Career Coaching Eligibility Distribution

As stated above, eligibility for coaching services includes enrollment in a restructured DE and/or energy program supported by the COETC grant, eligibility for TAA assistance, or unemployment/underemployment. Below, Table 5 shows the distribution at MCC of the students who have been seen as of Spring 2013 by the coach.

After reviewing the active electronic student files created in the ESCF and cross-referencing to those students enrolled in redesigned DE courses certified by the project lead, Rutgers has identified the student eligibility for 57.9 percent of all registered students as of May 2013. Student eligibility is presented in Table 5. Of this total, 0.4 percent of students have been recorded as TAA-eligible and 4.4 percent as TAA-like. An additional 39.5 percent of those

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[3] An active ESCF file is defined by Rutgers as a "response in progress" to which students' information has been entered into the ESCF, but is not yet submitted to the record. Career coaches have the ability to return and update information in an active ESCF. An inactive ESCF is considered a file that has been closed or submitted to the system by the career coach.

[4] Students registered by the career coach may not have an active ESCF file. In order for the student to be considered registered, the career coach has filled in basic information for a student such as ID number and name, but has not gone to the next step of opening up an ESCF file. Alternatively, a student in this count may have been served by the career coach and the student's ESCF has since been submitted to which it is then considered inactive.

students registered by the coach have enrolled in a redesigned DE course offered during the Spring 2012 term through Spring 2013.[5] Another 13.6 percent of those recorded as TAA-like have also enrolled in one or more DE redesigned courses.

Of the students with whom the career coach met, 4.8 percent of students were TAA-eligible/TAA-like and 13.6 percent were both in DE redesigns and TAA-eligible. This suggests that there is currently a relatively small pool of TAA students using coaching services (18.4 percent). If all the students whose eligibility remains to be validated were actually confirmed as TAA-eligible/like, it would amount to 60.5 percent of all students seen by her. In the months ahead it will be important to compare these percentages with MCC's entire student population to be sure that the career coach is meeting with as many TAA-eligible students as possible.

Table 5: Summary of the Eligibility of Students in MCC's Career Coach Caseload		
Eligibility Criteria	Percent of Students in Caseload	N (Caseload Population)
TAA-Eligible	0.4	1
TAA-Like	4.4	10
DE Redesigned	39.5	90
TAA + DE	13.6	31
Unknown	42.1	96
Total	100	228

SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED AND INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

Connections with Other Schools: MCC has directed its efforts towards connecting with other institutions and the community in order to bring about the reforms in the grant. Perhaps most notably, as the result of the career coach's inquiries, Red Rocks Community College's mobile learning lab visited MCC in summer 2013. The career coach also used the learning lab's visit as an opportunity to reach out to local employers and explain how the lab provides an opportunity for MCC students to receive the training that would qualify them for local water quality-related jobs.

Partnership with Workforce Centers: MCC and the Eastern Workforce Center have developed a strong partnership and process for referrals. A form was developed for bidirectional referrals between the workforce center and the college in order to better track clients and the services they are offered. If the workforce center staff feels that a client could benefit from DE skills, they

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[5] Three courses were validated by the project lead. However, the following course registration numbers (CRN) could not be located in Banner: 10808, 10974, and 10921. A second Banner query run on July 16, 2013, located CRN 10808 and 10921. This data will be included in the next analysis. According to the project lead, CRN 10974 should be 10947. This CRN will also be included in a future analysis.

will offer an assessment and refer them to the career coach at MCC. If a student is potentially eligible for workforce-related funding or needs job assistance, the career coach refers them to the workforce center. This bidirectional referral process offers students additional assistance and resources that would not necessarily be readily available to them without this partnership.

Tutorial Lab: With grant funding, MCC was able to staff a student services center where DE students can go to receive tutoring for their courses in English and math. Upon arrival at the lab, students are required to sign in and indicate the course for which they are planning to receive tutoring that day. There is one staff member in the lab at all times and other student tutors that are hired each semester. Student tutors are trained on different techniques and how to approach other students with assistance. The student services center also has computers available for students to complete the online components of their courses, such as computer-based modules for math and My Writing Lab for English. Currently, more math students are utilizing the lab, so there are more math tutors than English tutors. One English faculty member awarded weekly "points" to her students if they used My Writing Lab and later accompanied them to the lab. MCC plans to adjust the number of tutors to equalize the number of math and English tutors in the future.

Embedded Tutor: As an additional practice, the lab coordinator has been present in three DE math classes. The lab coordinator is then able to better assist the students who come to the lab for tutoring by understanding how the curriculum is being taught in class. By understanding the teaching style and terms used by the instructor, she is able to help students understand the concepts when they seek extra help in the lab. Students also feel comfortable asking for help because she is a routine fixture in the classroom.

Informed Leadership: MCC held a professional development workshop for its entire staff and faculty titled *Bridges Out of Poverty*. The workshop was intended to make all staff/faculty members of the college community more aware of the obstacles students face outside of the classroom, which faculty and staff felt was an asset to serving students. By learning about the types of challenges many students in the area face, faculty and staff can be more adept at recognizing these challenges and helping students overcome obstacles to complete their educational goals.

The project lead had made a strong effort to keep MCC's administration leadership informed of the TAACCCT grant activities. Those in leadership positions are appreciative and supportive of the progress being accomplished through the DE redesign and the integration of the career coach into the college's environment.

SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES

Costs of DE Courses: MCC and the Eastern Workforce Center have faced challenges when it comes to finding ways to pay tuition for clients needing to enroll in DE courses. On occasion, it is important for a client to have foundational DE skills before enrolling in a training program,

but the workforce center has a challenge in this recommendation because non-credit DE courses are not eligible to be covered by training dollars. It is difficult to provide an incentive for clients to take DE courses when they cannot be funded by the workforce center or through financial aid.

Costs for Soft Landing: With the changes in the DE curriculum, faculty and staff at MCC are trying to find the best soft landing method for the student population. Some of the programs that aid a soft landing environment are costly for MCC. The National Repository of Online Courses (NROC), for example, costs a school about $2,000, which is a high payment for MCC. There was some discussion of having students use the tutoring center with a set schedule as a soft landing that can also provide direct instruction to the students in need.

Lack of Online Programs: The career coach faces challenges in referring students into energy fields with the lack of programs available online. At the start of the career coach position, she expected to be guiding students into energy occupations through online curricula offered at other colleges. This online and hybrid coursework for energy programs, however, has not been available as expected.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MCC

- MCC and the Eastern Workforce Center should continue to explore the possibility of working together on testing methods to determine DE needs for students and workforce center clients.

- An orientation and subsequent discussion among faculty and advising staff regarding the DE redesign recommendations would be helpful. The different pathways provided in the new curriculum may shift the type of guidance provided to students by advisors and counselors, especially in relationship to algebra pathways.

- If the tutorial center is to be utilized as a soft landing going forward, MCC should consider increasing staffing for both English and math to increase capacity.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSORTIUM COLLEGES

- The presence of an embedded lab coordinator or tutor in all DE courses is something to consider. It has proven beneficial for the lab coordinator to sit in on the developmental math courses and, if consistent, may prove to benefit student tutoring services.

- The career coach's strategy for recruitment could prove beneficial to other colleges in the consortium. Perhaps by circulating the schedule in the class, thereby giving students the option to select a meeting time while still in class, or by having a handful of assistants help set appointments at the same time, the maximum number of appointments could be scheduled with a minimum of class disruption.