

# Los Medanos College Academic Student Survey Results

## Spring 2008

### Background

As a form of measuring qualitatively the characteristics, habits, and attitudes of an effective learner, in first transfer course, the attitudes and engagement in learning of students who took a developmental course were compared to those who did not take a developmental course. A survey research method was employed. The survey was constructed measuring three major areas:

1. Responding to Instructor Feedback
2. Using College Support Services, and
3. Managing Academic Workload.

The survey was administered to students in English and Math transfer level courses (English 100 and Math 34) in fall 2006. Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement to items in the three areas observed (Appendix A). Students were also asked to indicate what developmental classes they had taken at LMC. The data then was split according to those students who had taken at least ONE developmental class and those who had not. The samples for each group were: Students with at least one developmental class - 323 and Students with No developmental class - 112.

It is important to note that the results for this study are purely associational and do not imply cause-and-effect.

### Results

Responding to Instructor Feedback: No significant differences were found in this section. Students from both groups had similar high percentage responses in the YES (AGREE) category. However, it is interesting to note that the percentage of students in both groups decreased significantly (62% and 67%) to the question: "I write several drafts of a paper or check my work before turning it in."

	Enrolled in at Least ONE Dev. Ed. Course (n= 323)			Did Not Enroll in a Dev. Ed. Course (n=112)		
	YES	NO	Und.	YES	NO	Und.
<b>Responding to instructor feedback</b>						
I read the comments instructors write on my papers and assignments and discuss these comments with my instructors if necessary.	89%	4%	7	95%	2%	3%
I use the feedback I get from my instructors on my assignments and papers to improve my work.	95%	1%	4%	97%	1%	2%
In a class I usually know if I am learning what I need to know.	83%	4%	13%	88%	2%	10%
When I write a paper or do an assignment, I usually know if I have met the requirements of the assignment.	81%	6%	13%	79%	3%	17%
If my instructor gives me a grading guide or a rubric, I use it to evaluate and revise my work.	78%	7%	15%	79%	5%	15%
I write several drafts of a paper or check my work before turning it in.	62%	20%	18%	67%	14%	19%
When I don't understand something in class, I ask questions.	74%	8%	18%	72%	11%	17%

\*\* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Using College Support Services: Significant statistical differences were found at the .05 level for the two items “*When I need to, I make regular use of academic support services, e.g. math lab, Reading and Writing Center, tutoring, etc.*” and for “*Using the college’s academic support services has helped me succeed in my classes.*” It appears that compared to students who did not enroll in a developmental education class, more students who have enrolled in at least one Developmental Education class, use support services when needed and feel that using the support services has helped them succeed in their classes. Although not statistically significant, more students that had enrolled in at least one developmental education class make use of student services when need to (61% VS. 53%).

Using college support services	Enrolled in at Least ONE Dev. Ed. Course			Did Not Enroll in a Dev. Ed. Course		
	YES	NO	Und.	YES	NO	Und.
When I need to, I make regular use of the college’s student services, e.g. academic counseling and advising, Career Center, Transfer Center, Financial Aid, EOP&S, DSPS, CalWORKs, etc.	61%	21%	18%	53%	25%	22%
Using the college’s student services has helped me stay in school so that I can achieve my educational goal.	47%	22%	31%	43%	23%	34%
When I need to, I make regular use of academic support services, e.g. math lab, Reading and Writing Center, tutoring, etc.	71%	14%	15%	63%	22%	15%*
Using the college’s academic support services has helped me succeed in my classes.	61%	15%	24%	46%	20%	34%*

\* P < .05

\*\* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Managing Academic Load:** No statistical significant differences were found between groups, suggesting that both groups share similar behaviors and attitudes. One interesting observation is that about only 40% of students in both groups make it a point to meet with faculty during office hours. It is also interesting to observe that lower percentages in both groups of students are found to questions interactions with instructors: “I let my instructors know if I am having a problem that is interfering with my class work”, “If I was thinking about dropping a class, I would talk to the instructor or my counselor”.

<b>Managing your academic workload</b>	<b>Enrolled in at least ONE Dev. Ed. Course</b>			<b>Did not enroll in a Dev. Ed. Course</b>		
	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Und.</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Und.</b>
I let my instructors know if I am having a problem that is interfering with my class work	61%	20%	19%	56%	20%	16%
I come to class prepared, e.g., I do assigned readings and homework assignments, review lecture notes & handouts.	81%	6%	13%	80%	5%	15%
I attend class regularly even when I don't feel like it.	94%	2%	4%	94%	1%	5%
It is my responsibility to know what work I must do, even if I am absent or feel confused about what I have heard or read in class.	93%	1%	5%	94%	1%	5%
If I was thinking about dropping a class, I would talk to the instructor or my counselor first.	63%	17%	20%	59%	24%	17%
I put in long hours of studying when necessary.	76%	11%	13%	73%	14%	13%
I make it a point to meet with my instructors during office hours.	39%	27%	35%	41%	32%	27%
If I have to study, I study even when I would rather be doing something else.	70%	15%	15%	69%	13%	18%
I participate in class discussions – ask questions, bring up issues.	64%	18%	19%	67%	17%	16%
I keep a regular schedule to do my school work (class assignments, studying).	75%	11%	14%	65%	20%	15%

\*\* Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

## Discussion

The fact that there were no significant differences indicates that both groups share similar habits and attitudes. However, we don't know what the habits and attitudes were before for the students in both groups (those with developmental education courses and those without) in order to determine that there was growth. Also, how do we know if the group with at least one developmental education class actually matured due to the experience of taking the developmental education class or it was just natural maturity? Or perhaps developmental education students shared the same academic habits as transfer students from the beginning of their academic career. We need to know what their academic habits are before and after or, how they compare to students who are in developmental education courses. To control for any natural maturity and to compare the present behavior of transfer students and developmental education students, the addition of another control group of students in a developmental education class would be recommended to survey. The groups would look as follow:

GROUP A: Students in transfer level course with NO developmental education class prior

GROUP B: Students in transfer level course with at least one developmental education class

GROUP C: Students in developmental education level only.

With this design the results of GROUPS A and B would be compared to the results of GROUP C and would look for differences.