

PROGRAM REVIEW 2008-2011

Division: **Learning Resources: Student Success Center (SSC)**
Department or Program: **Reading Readiness (READ)**
Name and Title of Preparer(s): **Kristin Skager (Reading Readiness Coordinator)**

I. Description and Mission of the Program

Which area(s) does this program considerably address (check all that apply):

Basic Skills Transfer Career/Technical Other (describe)

A. Brief description of program and mission statement

The Reading Readiness Program (READ), one of the nine programs integrated within the Student Success Center (SSC) serves students in enrolled developmental reading classes two levels below English 1A. READ offers ½ unit reading labs required of all students who place into the 5 unit Read 200 or Read 211 courses. READ also coordinates with English Writing in providing one unit integrated reading and writing labs (LART 201 and LART 211).

The mission of READ is to provide a foundation of essential reading strategies and skills students can apply to the work in their five unit reading classes and to academic readings in content-area instruction. The coordinator of READ trains and mentors Readiness Teaching Assistants (TAs) to facilitate reading curriculum that is relevant and receptive to the needs and cultural differences of the students. To that end, cultural competence is emphasized in the curriculum and training of TAs.

Much of the actual instructional work in READ is performed by TAs. As in other SSC programs, students depend greatly on the work of TAs. These classified hourly employees facilitate learning for students in individual and small group settings and are regular members of the classified bargaining unit at De Anza. Working up to 16 hours weekly, they provide excellent attention to students at a very low cost to the district. Combines, up to 47 TAs have worked in READ and other SSC programs, but their numbers are down to only 33 because of the current hiring freeze.

READ collaborates with reading faculty and content-area faculty in the planning, instructing and the creating of activities for small group instruction. READ addresses the ever-changing student population and keeps up-to-date with current research and teaching practices. READ is student-centered and student-driven in the sense that the program, including the readings, activities and assignments, are assessed by students on a quarterly basis and revised accordingly for TAs who deliver the content.

B. Summary of the program's main strengths.

- READ draws from current research on effective small group instructional practices and reading theory and methodology. TAs are carefully trained in daily lesson plans and are observed several times in their delivery of curriculum to ensure they conduct effective lesson plans. The training meetings also address students' cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds and the delivery of

material. The training meetings are essential to the facilitation of the curriculum along with a discussion of what is working well with the students and what needs to be revised.

- The READ Coordinator helps students succeed by building professional relationships with TAs through dialogue, a list serve, and by forging connections with programs on campus, such as counseling, DSS and EDC. The strength of READ lies in the fact that the coordinator and the TAs see themselves as part of a community of support, intervention and outreach to help tackle the needs of students in order that their learning environment is supportive. READ follows guidelines in the Basic Skills Initiative to serve developmental students.
- READ serves Latino/a students in the Puente program and students of African American descent in the SanKofa scholars program.
- READ serves students in the LART program through coordination with EWRT.
- READ serves students in the year long Reading/Writing/math sequence.
- READ serves Filipino/a, Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander students through the Impact AAPI grant.
- READ has an overall success rate of 86% in fiscal year 2007-2008, up from 78% in fiscal year 2005-2006. This is a higher average than the 79% success for the college. The program has a retention rate of 92% in 2007-2008, up from 89% in 2005-2006. This is also higher than the overall college total (90%).

C. A summary of the program's main areas for improvement

- READ serves all students needing basic skills in reading and to work directly with various programs on campus to serve targeted populations (as stated above). READ needs to continue developing culturally responsive curricula for students of Latino/a, African descent, Filipino/a, Pacific Islander and South East Asian groups. The development of specialized curricula takes tremendous planning and time. However, the hiring freeze on TAs makes it virtually impossible to provide extra services for specialized programs.
- With a hiring freeze lifted, READ will continue to improve the success rates of targeted populations. While Asian students have a 93% success rate (as compared to 82% of college totals), students in targeted populations have lower success rates: students of African descent (70%), Filipino/a (84%), Latino/a (83%) and Pacific Islander (58%). A few of these percentages are higher than college totals Filipino/a (74%) and Latino/a (74%). However, all groups are lower than the success rate for Asian students. Clearly these targeted groups need to be emphasized by culturally response curriculum and teaching practices.

D. Expected outcomes

- READ has detailed daily lesson plans with learning outcomes related to the development of reading skills and strategies. Integrated within individual lesson plans are connections to content-area course work. Success in English 1A is one outcome for READ 212 as well as the ability for students to apply strategies to new complex texts and practice comprehension monitoring.
- READ 212 curriculum includes successful student strategies, such as annotation, paraphrasing, inference, vocabulary collection, summary writing and critical response. Read 200 workshops teach basic reading strategies, such as prediction, schema activation, reading fluency, and analysis. Readings are carefully chosen for both levels to appeal to the diversity of developmental students and activities call upon different learning styles: auditory, kinesthetic and visual.
- TAs are trained in identifying and working with students' learning disabilities. The goal is for every student to feel supported in their learning strengths and to gain knowledge on how to improve their skills.

II. Retention and Growth

A. Access, growth, and retention for all students

READ strives to accommodate every student who requires co-requisite lab courses. In the last three years, the program has served 1,679 students in 2005-06 to 1,778 students in 2007-08. A significant number of students traditionally enrolled in stand-alone reading classes are opting for the growing integrated reading/writing classes (LART 200 and LART 211). Title III grant's goal of expanding LART courses means an even greater collaboration with English Writing and more sections of LART 212.

READ had a retention rate of 92% in 2007-08, up from 89% in 2005-06, demonstrating a clear goal of increased access, growth and retention. However, the SSC will need to hire more TAs before Fall 2009 to accommodate future students.

B. Access, growth and retention for targeted populations

READ coordinates with English Writing to accommodate students in programs that target specific populations of students: SanKofa Scholars (African American/Ancestry), Puente (Latino/a), First Year Experience) and Impact AAPI (Filipino/a, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander). The success rate for targeted groups is 89% as compared to 93% for non-targeted students. This number has risen since 2005-06 (85%). The success rates for targeted students in LART 212 is 90%.

C. How the program addresses the basic skills needs of De Anza students

READ addresses basic reading/writing/discussion skills through various skills and strategies, including annotation, scaffolding, schema activation, previewing/pre-reading, reader response, critical reading, questioning, and intensive vocabulary collection and use.

III. Student Equity

A. What progress or achievement has the program made towards decreasing the student equity gap?

READ is a necessary component of programs that support closing the student equity gap. In fiscal year 2007-08, the success rate for Black students was 70%, up from 53% in 2005-06. The success rate for Latino/a students in 2007-08 was 83%, up from 70% in 2005-06. For Filipino/a students, their success rate was 84% in 2007-08, as compared to 81% in 2005-06. The success rate of targeted groups is still below Asian students (93%). The RRP has a goal of 89% for targeted groups in 2010/11.

B. In what ways will the program continue working toward achieving these goals?

READ will continue to collaborate with specialized programs to meet the demand of underserved, underrepresented students and to work toward closing the equity gap. The READ coordinator will participate in workshops on cultural responsive teaching practices, including the reading department retreat and various support gatherings (example: AAPI workshops on serving Southeast, Pacific islander and Filipino/a students).

C. What challenges exist in the program in reaching such goals?

The most pressing challenge facing READ is the hiring freeze set against hiring qualified TAs to facilitate lab courses. TAs come from a variety of different arenas: the workforce, retirement, and graduate school and offer a unique contribution to the success of students. Recently, LART 200 instructors have expressed a need for supplemental instruction for these students, many of who are students from targeted populations. The development of this new one-unit lab will not be possible without lifting the hiring freeze of TAs.

IV. Budget Limitations

A. Limited Funding and Critical Resources

The TA hiring freeze needs to be lifted to serve over 1,700 students each year who require co-requisite reading labs. Special emphasis on targeted populations is critical to the retention and success of these students. Any further limitations on hiring will result in closed sections

B. Describe the consequence to students and the college in general if the program were eliminated or significantly reduced.

Student success in college relies on a fundamental understanding of reading. Research indicates a powerful connection between students' progress in reading and writing being reciprocal. Without reading, students' progress in writing would suffer greatly. Moreover, READ prepares students for college level reading in content-area and writing course work. Over 80% of students who place into developmental reading classes would not receive critical instruction. Finally, content-area classes along with current studies on trends in college reading find that students are not reading as often or as thoroughly. Content-area instructors have expressed the need for reading expertise and support for their students in this area. With the increase in students due to the economic downturn and the projected influx of students cut out of the CSU system, students would be severely impacted by any kind of reduction in the program.