The first cohort of STARS First Year Experience started in fall 2010, so how are they doing now? When we caught up with Alejandro Anaya, he was studying math just a few minutes before we did the interview. He studies each subject every day for 30 to 50 minutes after completing his homework, which has paid off with a 3.8 cumulative GPA. He is on track to complete two AA degrees by the end of the semester, and is already on the wait list for the Radiology Technician program. In the meantime, he intends to take more classes to prepare him for a Biology/Conservation major at San Jose State University. After completing that degree, he may continue his education and become a doctor or lawyer.

As a STARS student Alejandro learned to establish a relationship with his instructors, and the importance of being interdependent through using study groups and campus resources such as the Integrated Learning Center and the Math Learning Center. Like many students, Alejandro’s most significant barrier to staying enrolled in college has been financial. Even as a Pell Grant recipient, he has worked at part time jobs with flexible schedules and has started applying for scholarships to continue studying.

With the encouragement of his parents, who came from Mexico and encouraged him to take advantage of the educational opportunities that they didn’t have, he is determined to do the work necessary to secure his future.

New First Year Experience Learning Portfolio

English faculty members Geneffa Jonker and Tera Martin, who are teaching classes that are part of the STARS First Year Experience (FYE) program this semester, are designing an FYE learning portfolio that can be used in any English course. This portfolio will include readings, reflections, and other activities to provide students with a greater understanding of effective college student behaviors and their own personal goals and values. This idea has already been successfully implemented at other community colleges and supports many of the California Community College recommendations for effective practices in basic skills.

Some of the activities and assignments include assessing personal learning styles and goals, attending and reflecting on campus workshops and multicultural campus events, writing about the new student orientation, and participating in service learning. These are meant to help students increase their level of social integration, motivation and engagement in college. There is also an emphasis on successfully managing emotions in order to exercise more control in the affective domain, which can greatly impact performance and course success. All students in English classes can potentially benefit from this new resource!
Supplemental Instruction: How’s That Going for Us?

STARS has consistently offered Supplemental Instruction (SI) for students taking specific sections of math 254, 154, and 152. At the Integrated Learning Center in Watsonville, SI has become part of the instructional support program offered for math, and is being offered this semester for Chemistry 30A as well. On a weekly basis, SI leaders meet as a group and also with the instructor of the class for which SI is being offered, which they attend in order to observe issues that students are having and encourage them to attend the voluntary SI sessions. These are offered 3–4 times per week and include homework review, preparation for quizzes, and practice of effective learning strategies. Special review sessions are offered for exams. Most importantly, students learn the power of forming study groups to grapple with and master challenging subjects.

Challenges include the turnover in SI leaders, who are usually students close to transfer who move on after two or three semesters. In addition, since attendance is voluntary regardless of need, many students who would benefit from the sessions do not attend. After tracking course success and SI attendance for five semesters, preliminary results show that 78% of students who attend at least ten SI sessions and 59% of students that attend one or more SI sessions pass with a C grade or better, compared to only 45% of students who did not attend any SI sessions.

It’s All About Relationships— a Flex Week Discussion

During Flex Week in the fall, representatives from all learning communities and related cohorts came together to discuss the programs and share strategies that had been developed which had proven to have a positive impact on student success. ACE, AMAP, Puente, REAL, SMP, STARS, ACCESS, HONORS, MESA, STEM, and Supernova were invited (see information about these programs at www.cabrillolearning.org). The 24 faculty and staff in attendance generated a list of findings that included strategies for both students and faculty.

**Strategies that instructors have used to increase engagement with students:**

* Remember a personal thing about each student to increase the sense of connection
* Use office hours in the classroom (after class is done) to serve as a resource as students do homework
* Return a particular assignment only during office hours, to make students more comfortable with coming to see you
* Have students (or a student) discuss the assignment before starting the lecture, to share challenges or difficulties
* During the last 20 minutes, “Tell me what you know” activity – allow students to participate in teaching process
* Take a picture (with permission) of each student and make a chart with names underneath
* Go immediately to the door as class ends and greet students as they leave
* Cancel class occasionally and use it as conference time for one-on-one sessions with students

As we open the dialog more about student success, future summits on best practices to be shared from learning communities will benefit us all!
Got questions? Need data? Use SOFIA, your personal research system

Have you experimented with new curriculum recently? Tried a new teaching style?

Use Cabrillo’s new faculty inquiry system to access success and completion data for your sections of a particular course. Filter the data to examine potential achievement gaps based on student demographics. SOFIA, Student Outcomes for Faculty Inquiry and Analysis, allows faculty and other users to login to a secure interface and run queries based on specific classes, sections and other well-defined student cohorts (e.g., learning communities, EOPS students, DSPS, etc.).

SOFIA can answer questions about:
- Success & Completion by course or department
- Retention by cohort
- Student Progress & Attainment of common outcomes like completion of a degree or transfer

Key features:
- User friendly interface
- Section-level data
- Upload 99 custom cohorts using Data on Demand
- Advanced Layout pivot table
- Export to Excel, CSV, or text
- Demographic filters: age, gender, ethnicity, placement level, & course completion
- Special population filters: EOPS, DSPS, Veterans, & more
- Learning Community filter: STARS, Puente, Honors, etc.

How can YOU use SOFIA?
- Make data-driven curricular & pedagogical changes
- Use data to support all stages of the Program Planning process
- Assess the achievement gap in a course or department
- Longitudinal cohort tracking

To learn more join our FLEX session on Thursday, August 29 or contact Terra Morris at temorris@cabrillo.edu

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”
~Zora Neale Hurston
Since June 2010, 163 students have participated in the STARS First Year Experience learning community across five cohorts and four disciplines, all with the goal of completing the basic skills English and math sequences.

Cohort configurations piloted to-date:
- Day and evening cohorts
- Watsonville and Aptos
- Part-time and full-time enrollment
- 4-6 week summer bridge
- One day pre-term orientation
- Math plus voluntary or mandatory Supplemental Instruction (SI)

Disciplines:
- Health & Human Services
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Early Childhood Education (ECE)
- Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM)

Success indicators for basic skills students include:
- Continuous enrollment for 3+ consecutive terms
- Completion of 1st level* in the English sequence
- Completion of 1st level* in the math sequence
- Completion of transfer-level English (ENGL-1A)
- Completion of degree-applicable math (MATH-152)

*1st level in the basic skills English and math sequences is based on students’ starting placement level determined by the assessment test and equivalent coursework from other academic institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STARS - All cohorts (n=163)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz South County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement Levels</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English-255</td>
<td>60% (98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-100</td>
<td>40% (65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math-254</td>
<td>49% (79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math-154</td>
<td>23% (37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math-152</td>
<td>23% (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Math Placement</td>
<td>5% (9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographics for all STARS participants from 2010—2012

Retention by Term & Cohort

Research shows that continuous enrollment is a positive predictor of degree completion and/or transfer and that basic skills students take longer to complete than transfer-level students. After five primary terms, 60% of STARS students from Cohort 1 are still enrolled compared to 41% of the comparison cohort. After three primary terms, 65% of STARS Cohort 2 remain enrolled compared to 51% of the comparison cohort.
Basic Skills English Sequence

Completion of 1st level in basic skills English sequence

STARS Cohorts (n=155)

- 74% successful completion of 1st level
- 16% no progress in English sequence

Comparison Cohorts (n=406)

- 50% successful completion of 1st level
- 50% no progress in English sequence

Almost two-thirds (74%) of STARS students have successfully completed the first level of English into which they placed, compared to half (50%) of the students in the comparison group.

Completion of English–1A (transfer–level)

STARS Cohorts (n=101)

- 63% successful completion of ENGL–1A
- 37% pre-transfer English (ESL–204, ENGL–255, & ENGL–100)

Comparison Cohorts (n=217)

- 75% successful completion of ENGL–1A
- 25% pre-transfer English (ESL–204, ENGL–255, & ENGL–100)

Of the students that had enough time (based on students’ starting placement level and cohort start term) to complete English–1A, 37% of STARS students have successfully completed transfer–level English compared to 25% of the comparison group.
Over half (55%) of the students that participated in STARS have successfully completed the first level of math into which they placed, compared to just a quarter (25%) of the comparison group.

While a greater proportion of STARS students compared to their comparison group have successfully completed the first level of math into which they placed, a greater proportion of the comparison group has successfully completed MATH–152 (19% and 16%, respectively). Although STARS MATH–254 course success is significantly higher than non–STARS MATH–254 success, STARS students have struggled with MATH–154 and MATH–152. The program is still working on extending the margin of success to the next levels in the math sequence. The focus of Fall 2013 is on refining and improving our model to increase success in 154 and 152.
The final Title V First Year Experience pilot will focus on making basic skills students aware of the advantages and opportunities for advanced degrees, even in the CTE fields of study.

Three cohorts with different summer bridge experiences will share common elements of support throughout the year.

2013–14 will mark the fourth, final STARS First Year Experience (FYE) learning community piloted through the Title V grant. After analyzing the impact throughout the four years of the different pilots on student success, the most effective elements will be identified.

The final pilot design will introduce students to the advantages of and opportunities for advanced degrees, including those in CTE fields, while supporting their completion of the basic skills sequence in English and math.

Three cohorts will pilot distinct summer bridge options while sharing the following elements during the academic year:

- Supplemental Instruction for math
- CG 52 (College Study Skills) in Fall and a FYE Student Success Seminar in Spring
- Early Alert monitoring of academic progress during each semester

- Orientation and family BBQ before the start of the fall semester
- Guest speakers and site visits to focus on career and transfer opportunities

The three cohorts are designed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement</th>
<th>Summer bridge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English 100 &amp; Math 152</td>
<td>August 19-23 orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math 254, English 100 or 255</td>
<td>June 17-28, intensive math review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 255 or 100, Math 254-152</td>
<td>EOPS Summer Migrant Program*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students in this cohort will qualify to participate in the EOPS Summer Migrant Program.

Space is still available for these cohorts. For information, contact Eric Grabel, STARS FYE Coordinator at ergrabie@cabrillo.edu or (831) 477–3293.

Title V Resources for Faculty

The Title V offices in room 501, co-located with the Learning Communities Center, has several copies of On Course resources with strategies and ideas for making classroom activities more meaningful for students. Whether or not you have been able to attend one or more of the training sessions for On Course, you are welcome to stop by and borrow a book, CD, workbook or instructor’s manual to learn more about this methodology to engage students as active learners.

In addition, there are copies of curriculum that has been developed through the grant for ESL, math, English, reading and other subjects. In general, the office is open between 9 am and 3 pm—contact Windy Rouse at (831) 477–3291 or wirouse@cabrillo.edu if you are interested in browsing the collection.
Title V Projects – Increasing Student Success by Strengthening Institutions

Visit us online at cabrillostars.org!

Have a Sizzling STEM Summer!

The STEM Title III grant is moving full speed ahead with the remodel of the 800 building, coordination of the 2013 STEM summer program, developing academic support for Calculus students and planning a STEM colloquium series.

The Summer Program is scheduled for four weeks (July 29 to August 23) and designed for students interested in exploring the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) through hands-on activities, group projects and tours of local STEM organizations. Participants should have successfully completed or be currently enrolled in math 152, and plan to attend Cabrillo full-time in Fall 2013. Contact Kelli Horner at kehorner@cabrillo.edu or (831) 477-3235 for more information.

On Friday, May 24th at the Horticulture center, the STEM grant and MESA (Math, Engineering and Science Achievement) will be co-hosting an End-of-the-Year celebration for students. At 6:00 p.m. there will be a team science challenge (group activity), followed by dinner, the recognition of MESA and Friends O’MESA transfer students and science scholarship recipients, and live music for celebration.

The new STEM Center in the 800 building will include MESA, the PLC (Physics and Engineering Learning Center), and the CS/CIS Networking lab. In addition, the learning and teaching environments for the Computer Science, Computer Information Systems, Engineering, Engineering Technology and Physics departments will be expanded, upgraded and centralized.

Every 2nd and 4th Friday in the new STEM Center, students, faculty and professionals will be invited to present on STEM internships (past experiences and future possibilities), new inventions, engineering abroad programs, mini-math jams, and club involvement at Cabrillo and beyond. This STEM Colloquium is designed to enhance the personal and academic experience of students by exposing them to new knowledge, experience and possibilities within the STEM fields.