2010

# First-time First-Year Full-Tim Students Transitioning from High School to the University of Kentucky: The Academic Readiness Program, 2009-2010

Randolph Hollingsworth
*University of Kentucky*, dolph@uky.edu

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# The Academic Readiness Program 2009 – 2010

Deans Council
Office of Enrollment Management
Office of Institutional Diversity
Division of Student Affairs
Office of Undergraduate Education

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## Introduction and Background

Beginning with the incoming first-year, full-time undergraduate student cohort for the fall semester of 2009, the University of Kentucky implemented a comprehensive set of interventions, collectively known as the Academic Readiness Program (ARP), for developmental education as mandated by 13 KAR 2:020 (see more on this new law at the Council on Postsecondary Education website, http://cpe.ky.gov/policies/academicinit/deved). This program has been designed to help those first-time, first-year, full-time students admitted to UK whose test scores indicate that they may not be fully prepared for the academic challenges of this Research I University. Although these students meet the undergraduate admissions requirements, their academic profiles identify them as being "academically at-risk." The ARP follows these at-risk students through their first year, providing them with targeted information, guidance and a regimen of academic skill development that is tailored to a particular student's need.

The target population for this program is those first time, first-year, full-time students admitted to UK with ACT sub-scores (or SAT test scores) less than scores identified in figure1.

| | **ACT** | **SAT** |
|---|---|---|
| Reading | 20 | 490 (verbal) |
| Math | 19 | 470 |
| English | 18 | 450 (verbal) |

Figure 1

The State law mandates that the University administer a placement exam for an admitted student whose standardized score in any of the three subject areas falls below the thresholds identified in Figure 1. The University of Kentucky has adopted the ACT COMPASS test as its placement exam for the Academic Readiness Program.

## Academic Readiness Program Goals

This program supports and expands upon the work already undertaken by the colleges, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management and Undergraduate Education staff and faculty who have already shown they "take student retention seriously."[1] The Academic Readiness Program facilitates in very intentional ways the at-risk student's transition from high school to the University of Kentucky. The most important metric for ascertaining the success of the ARP is that the graduation rates of this targeted population will improve by an average of 3% each

[1] Vincent Tinto, "Taking Student Retention Seriously: Rethinking the First Year of College," speech presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers, April 15, 2002. Accessed online, June 23, 2008, at http://suedweb.syr.edu/Faculty/Vtinto/Files/AACRAOSpeech.pdf.

year for the next five years – in keeping with the Kentucky Senate Bill 1 expectations (for more on this, see http://cpe.ky.gov/policies/academicinit/senbill1/).The overall goals of the Academic Readiness Program are to:

- Establish networks for success with University faculty, librarians, professional academic advisors and other student support staff;
- Successfully complete introductory courses and workshops that supplement and/or provide credit toward the first year student course load; and,
- Create strong and lasting peer relationships that support best practices in university student learning.

## ARP Student Learning Outcomes

The Academic Readiness Program offers specific academic interventions designed to address a student's academic deficiency in one or more of the academic disciplines identified by state regulation (i.e., mathematics, English and reading). At the same time, the program focuses on the cultural aspects of college readiness, e.g., believing one can learn, having a reason to learn, developing the ability to overcome obstacles and acquiring an academic identity.

There are four learning outcomes associated with the ARP:

1. compute fluently, write correct justifications for their solutions to problems and apply the methods of algebra in new contexts to solve unfamiliar problems;
2. demonstrate college-ready literacy skills and logic capacities necessary for success in UK's ENG 104 course;
3. read a variety of college level texts with improved comprehension through increased vocabulary development, synthesize and summarize across multiple text formats in a clear and concise manner, develop and apply critical thinking skills in multiple contexts, and apply learning across a variety of disciplines; and
4. express and exhibit a strong understanding of the college-going culture, including a belief in their own ability to learn in a college environment and the development of internal motivation to engage in behaviors and practices which increase the probability of academic success.

These student learning outcomes can be mapped in association with the four different interventions described below:

*Mathematics*

First-year students whose COMPASS Math Test places them into the ARP are expected to fulfill the pathway for introductory mathematics best determined by their major. Typically, this means they must enroll and successfully complete MA 108R before enrolling in their first credit-bearing mathematics course, either MA 109 (College Algebra) or MA 111 (Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics).

ARP students who do not need to take MA109 – those who are being advised to work toward enrolling in MA111 to fulfill their University Studies Program requirements – may use some informal strategies to remediate and then re-take the COMPASS test.

In MA 108R, student progress is assessed throughout the semester using homework, quizzes, and exams. Results on a uniform pre/post test directly map improvement on each of the following learning objectives:

Upon completion of MA 108R, the student will be able to:

1. perform arithmetic operations on real numbers;
2. recognize functions, domain, range, and function notation;
3. perform basic operations on polynomials and factor polynomials;
4. solve linear equations and application problems;
5. solve linear and compound inequalities and write solutions using interval notation;
6. simplify and perform operations with rational expressions;
7. solve rational equations and application problems;
8. graph linear functions;
9. write linear equations from given appropriate data;
10. simplify exponents;
11. simplify radicals and perform algebra on radical expressions;
12. solve radical equations;
13. solve quadratic equations and application problems; and
14. graph quadratic functions.

*English*

The Academic Readiness Writing Workshop is designed to guide ARP students as they undertake a single reading-based writing project in a one-credit-hour course. The project resembles the sorts of reading-based, theme-focused projects assigned in ENG 104, culminating in an essay that reports on and assumes a stance toward some topic of public import. Activities intended to highlight and develop particular literacy skills and capacities will thus be represented as purpose-driven, requisite to the completion of the project. The students undertake regular, reiterated work in reading: in construing, interpreting, applying, and managing texts. Students start with work on features typical to general analytical nonfiction writing: movement between general and specific within and across paragraphs; difference between fact and opinion; words and views reported from others in relation to a writer's own words and views. They then proceed through methods of working with texts: glossing, paraphrase, summary, quotation, comparison, commentary. Attention to grammar will be featured in class sessions focusing on the form and construction of sentences: focusing on such general elements as clauses and phrases, emphasis and subordination, given and new information in sentence development. Students will be expected to complete the writing project for the course through drafts, with the instructor guiding revisions in one-on-one settings. The Writing Center is also available to students throughout the course.

Course grades are drawn from four components: weekly assignments in writing on readings; writings toward the course project (invention and planning activities, draft sections, full essay drafts); activities in sentence development and other discrete skills; and the final project essay. Student learning outcomes are described as follows:

**ENGAGEMENT**

- Calls on personal experience and reflection.
- Uses first-person narration.
- Develops audience awareness.

**STRUCTURE**

- Includes an effective introduction and conclusion.
- Uses narrative, definition, and analysis.
- Introduces writing modes such as compare/contrast, cause and effect, classification, and argument, which may be utilized at the student's discretion.
- Emphasizes paragraph development and transitions between paragraphs.
- Invites the incorporation of a visual aid (photograph, chart, etc.).

**ANALYSIS**

- Analyzes personal experience and shared readings.

**EVIDENCE**

- Uses personal experiences, fieldwork in the form of at least one interview, and shared readings.
- Incorporates and acknowledges sources.
- Summarizes, paraphrases, and quotes from shared readings.

**STYLE (AND GRAMMAR)**

- Writes descriptive prose.
- Uses correct spelling and proper punctuation.
- Experiments with sentence variety.

**CONVENTIONS**

- Acknowledges sources.
- Introduces bibliography.

### *Reading*

The Academic Readiness Reading Lab is designed to improve an ARP student's proficiency in reading strategies, learning strategies and study strategies within the context of the disciplinary course requirements of the University Studies Program. It is important to stress that reading strategies taught in this lab (one credit hour per week) are applied to college-level reading materials. The lab is based on the following learning outcomes:

- Read with comprehension
    1. Identify main ideas in selected readings.
    2. Recognize common prefixes, roots, and suffixes to determine word meanings.
    3. Identify patterns in texts to improve comprehension.
- Write clearly
    1. Summarize and paraphrase texts without plagiarizing.
    2. Combine information from different sources in a summary.
- Apply critical thinking skills
    1. Use context clues to understand new vocabulary.
    2. Analyze texts to distinguish fact and opinion.
    3. Recognize alternate viewpoints in selected readings.
- Apply learning

1. Apply critical reading skills while reading content course textbooks.
2. Develop reading study strategies for reading content course textbooks.
3. Access an online library tutorial and apply those skills to perform research and locate readings in the Online Library Database.
4. Create a reading dossier by applying the reading and study strategies learned in the A&S 100 or GEN 109 course to selected readings in the paired content textbook.

**READING IN-SEAT SEMINARS AND ONLINE WEBINARS**

These seminars (whether in-seat or online) are designed to address specific reading, learning, and study strategies as an extension/reinforcement of the reading lab content. Reading Lab Teaching Assistants are encouraged to provide extra credit to students who attend one or more seminar sessions and assign the webinars as homework as well as to reference the webinar content in class. One main goal of these learning experiences is to provide college-level reading instruction to a wider audience than enrollment in the Reading Labs can address. These sessions are based on the following instructional objectives:

- To help students learn how to effectively engage in college-level reading activities.
- To help students strengthen college-level reading skills and strategies.
- To develop college-level reading skills that enhances academic achievement thus reducing barriers that impede academic success.
- To use technology to enhance college-level reading and research skills (webinars only).

*Social Networking via Big Blue Network and Hobsons EMT Retain Communications*

Having ARP students understand and inculcate the academic expectations of the University is the fourth and final learning outcome of the Academic Readiness Program. The Office of Undergraduate Education proposes to use the Ning platform of the Big Blue Network and Hobsons EMT communications software to introduce the entire cohort of ARP students to the academic culture of the University – both the academic expectations of faculty and the engagement strategies that undergird academic success. In particular, the following points of learning will be introduced, developed and assessed. Students who are successful in this aspect of the Academic Readiness Program will be able to:

- demonstrate they understand the university's high expectations in terms of academic rigor; and,
- express and exhibit an understanding of the importance of developing and maintaining active engagement in the co-curricular life of the university via regular and/or sustained participation in campus (online or offline) events and communities.

The learning outcomes include the following:

- Students will actively contribute to the conversations on the BBN site, including chat wall responses, discussion forum participation, and blogging;
- Students will join and contribute to the groups in BBN and respond to the Hobsons Retain conversational survey, showing personal attitudes and engagement with groups which enhance probability of academic success;
- Students will "friend" on BBN student leaders/staff/faculty in areas related to their academic success; and,
- Students will participate in the use of PLATO, Mathskeller, The Study, Career Center, Writing Center and academic advising events as informal learning, self-directed improvement strategies.

*The Division of Undergraduate Education contracted with Dr. Laurie Henry of the UK College of Education to develop a report that determined the level to which the students in the program attained the stated learning outcomes. She was also to recommend strategies and policy revisions to improve the program for future incoming first year students at the University of Kentucky.*

*The report from Dr. Henry is appended herewith.*

# UK ACADEMIC READINESS PROGRAM

2009-2010 Academic Year
Status Report, November 2010

Prepared by Dr. Laurie A. Henry
Co-Director, P20 College & Career Readiness Lab
College of Education, University of Kentucky

## ARP SUMMARY

The Academic Readiness Program (ARP) provides support services and instructional interventions to first time, first year students enrolled as full time freshman at the University of Kentucky in the areas of mathematics, English, and reading. Admitted students who do not meet College Readiness guidelines are identified for participation in the Academic Readiness Program based on ACT sub-scores in these three areas; more specifically, cut-scores are identified as follows: Mathematics (less than 19), English (less than 18), and Reading (less than 20). Although these students do meet the undergraduate admissions requirements for the University of Kentucky, their academic profiles identify them as being "academically at-risk." Thus the ARP provides a comprehensive set of interventions for developmental education as mandated by 13 KAR 2:020 (see http://cpe.ky.gov/policies/academicinit/deved). The ARP follows these at-risk students through their first year of college, providing them with targeted information, guidance, and a regimen of academic skill development that is tailored to each particular student's needs.

The Academic Readiness Program (ARP) supports and expands upon the work already undertaken by the colleges, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Undergraduate Education staff and faculty to further assist at-risk students' transition from high school to the University of Kentucky to ensure academic success. The success of the ARP is measured by an overall increase in graduation rates (at least 3 percent) of this targeted population each year for the next five years, which aligns with the expectations set forth in Senate Bill 1 (see http://cpe.ky.gov/policies/academicinit/senbill1).

The overall goals of the Academic Readiness Program are to:

- Establish networks for success with University faculty, librarians, professional academic advisors, and other student support staff;
- Successfully complete introductory courses and workshops that supplement and/or provide credit toward the first year students course load; and,
- Create strong and lasting peer relationships that support best practices in university student learning.

To meet these goals, specific learner outcomes have been identified for each of three academic intervention areas, mathematics, English, reading, as well as a fourth target areas that focuses on the academic culture and college readiness for successful transition from high school to postsecondary education as described below.

## OVERARCHING ARP LEARNER OUTCOMES

The Academic Readiness Program offers specific academic interventions designed to address a student's academic deficiency in one or more of the academic disciplines identified by state regulation (i.e., mathematics, English, and reading). At the same time, the program focuses on the cultural aspects of

college readiness, e.g., believing one can learn, having a reason to learn, developing the ability to overcome obstacles, and acquiring an academic identity.

There are four overarching learning outcomes associated with the ARP as follows:

5. Mathematics: Compute fluently, write correct justifications for their solutions to problems, and apply the methods of algebra in new contexts to solve unfamiliar problems;
6. English: Demonstrate college-ready literacy skills and logic capacities necessary for success in UK's ENG 104 course;
7. Reading: Read a variety of college level texts with improved comprehension through increased vocabulary development, synthesize and summarize across multiple text formats in a clear and concise manner, develop and apply critical thinking skills in multiple contexts, and apply learning across a variety of disciplines; and
8. Academic Culture/College Readiness: Express and exhibit a strong understanding of the college-going culture, including a belief in their own ability to learn in a college environment and the development of internal motivation to engage in behaviors and practices, which increase the probability of academic success.

Below is a status report providing evidence regarding the successful implementation of the four intervention areas of the Academic Readiness Program (ARP) during the 2009-2010 academic year according to the above stated academic discipline areas.

**MATHEMATICS**

First-year students whose COMPASS Math Test placed them into the ARP were expected to fulfill the pathway for introductory mathematics best determined by their major. Typically, this resulted in the enrollment and successful completion of a developmental math course (MT 055, MT 065, or MA 108R) before enrolling in their first credit-bearing mathematics course, either *College Algebra* (MA 109) or *Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics* (MA 111). ARP students who do not need to take MA109 – those who were advised to work toward enrolling in MA111 to fulfill their University Studies Program requirements – were able to use some informal strategies to remediate (e.g. PLATO online lessons) and then re-take the COMPASS Math test (COMPASS Algebra Score of 30 or higher) to determine if they could place out of ARP.

In MA 108R, student progress was assessed throughout the semester using homework, quizzes, and exams. Results on a uniform pre/post test directly map improvement on each of the following learning objectives:

Upon completion of MA 108R, the successful student was able to demonstrate the following:

1. Perform arithmetic operations on real numbers;
2. Recognize functions, domain, range, and function notation;
3. Perform basic operations on polynomials and factor polynomials;
4. Solve linear equations and application problems;
5. Solve linear and compound inequalities and write solutions using interval notation;
6. Simplify and perform operations with rational expressions;
7. Solve rational equations and application problems;
8. Graph linear functions;
9. Write linear equations from given appropriate data;
10. Simplify exponents;
11. Simplify radicals and perform algebra on radical expressions;
12. Solve radical equations;
13. Solve quadratic equations and application problems; and
14. Graph quadratic functions.

**Placement Criteria**

Students that scored below 100 in the Pre-Algebra section or below 30 in the Algebra section of the COMPASS test were encouraged to consider the following coursework, displayed in Table 1 below, made available from institutions in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (e.g., Bluegrass Community and Technical College).

Table 1

*Mathematics Placement Recommendations for Freshmen (Fall 2009)*

| COMPASS Math Assessment Scores | Recommended Coursework |
|---|---|
| 0-16 Pre-Algebra score range | MT 010 (non-credit) or Adult Education Services for Foundation Skills classes |
| 17-40 *Pre-Algebra* score range | MT 55 (3 hrs - student will pay KCTCS course tuition as non-degree seeking, visiting student) |
| 34-99 *Pre-Algebra* score range | MT 55 / MT 65 combination course (6 hrs - student will pay KCTCS course tuition as visiting student) |
| 34-59 *Pre-Algebra* and/or 16-22 *Algebra* scores | MT 65 (3 hrs - student will pay KCTCS course tuition as visiting student) |
| 60-99 *Pre-Algebra* and/or 23-29 *Algebra* scores | MT 65/MA 108R combo (6 hrs - student will pay 3 hrs KCTCS course tuition as visiting student and could take the MA108R as dual enrollment student) |

These courses would be in addition to (and separate from) a student's UK schedule - they apply for admission, register and pay tuition for that class as a non-degree-seeking student. The Pre-Algebra/Algebra COMPASS scores are required upon enrolling in an introductory math course at any KCTCS institution.

**Additional ARP Options for Mathematics**

An alternative to the above course enrollments was provided that allowed students to work in PLATO, UK's free online lessons with a tutor, during the Fall 2009 semester and enroll in MA 108R or MA 111 for the Spring 2010 semester, depending on the student's major. For additional information regarding this mathematics intervention alternative, see the UK Undergraduate Education's website (at http://www.uky.edu/UGS/tutoring.html).

**Results**

Through a partnership with Bluegrass Community & Technical College (BCTC), twenty-two sections of Developmental Math (MA 108R) enrolled n=660 undergraduate students during the Fall 2009 semester; ten sections of Developmental Math (MA 108R) enrolled n=208 undergraduate students during the Spring 2010 semester; there was a total undergraduate student enrollment in MA 108R of n=868 during the 2009-2010 academic year. Note that these enrollment numbers include students (approximately 50%) who are not classified as ARP students (i.e. first year transition students placed in MA108R based on COMPASS math scores and/or ACT scores upon admission to UK).

*Outcome/Objective 1: A pre- and post-test will be given to students in each pilot section to compare results before and after students have taken MA 108. It is expected that, of those who complete the course with a D or better, 90% will perform at least 20% higher than they did on the pre-test.*

In the BCTC sections, 93.75% of ARP students who completed the course with a D or better performed at least 20% higher on the post-test than they did on the pre-test. The average gain in percentage points between pre- and post-test for ARP students was 46.986 points. As a whole, 92% of ARP and non-ARP students who completed the course with a D or better performed at least 20% higher on the post-test than they did on the pre-test. The average percentage gain for the entire group of BCTC students was 46.488.

*Outcome/Objective 2: On the post-test, it is expected that 80% of those who complete the course with a C or better will perform at least 70% or higher on the post-test.*

Upon analysis of the data, this objective may be a bit far reaching. 54.615% of ARP students who received a C or better in the course scored 70% or higher on the post-test. 72.31% of ARP students who received a C or better in the course scored 60% or higher on the post-test. Item analysis of the post-test revealed some common questions that students are missing, often involving mistakes in symbolism on the multiple-choice portion of the tests. Some common items will be incorporated into the regular semester exams in hopes of improving these particular concepts. However, the objective itself may need to be adjusted after further analysis. Overall results for both ARP and non-ARP students showed that 56.77% who received a C or better in the course scored 70% or higher on the post-test and 76.86% who received a C or better in the course scored 60% or higher on the post-test.

Outcome/Objective 3: Success rates, defined by the percentage of students to successfully complete MA 108 with a C or better, will be gathered and compared to previous statistics. A success rate of at least 65% is expected in this first semester.

It is our belief that success rates are hampered by the large percentage of students who truly belong in a lower developmental course than MA 108. We define retention as students who received a D or better in MA 108R. BCTC sections retained 153 students of the 210 ARP students served, or 72.86%. We define success rates, as above, as percentages of students with a C or better. BCTC sections had a success rate of 60.95%. This compares to an overall retention rate for all students in BCTC sections of 81.51% and an overall success rate of 59.64%. However, an analysis of placement shows more interesting results. According to BCTC Mandatory Placement, a student is properly placed if he/she has an ACT score of 19 or above, an SAT of 470 or above, or a COMPASS Algebra score of 30 or above. Among ARP students properly placed by these guidelines, the success rate was 71.59%. Among ARP students improperly placed, the success rate was 54.62%. We recommend the use of additional recitation sections for students who place below BCTC guidelines.

Outcome/Objective 4: Provided entry COMPASS scores are available, students who did not meet the COMPASS score necessary to take MA 108 at the community college will be identified. Success rates and post-test results for these students will be compared to those of students who met the necessary COMPASS score. See the results listed under Objective 3.

**ENGLISH**

The Academic Readiness Writing Workshop (A&S 100) was designed to guide ARP students as they undertook a single reading-based writing project in a one-credit-hour course. The project resembled the type of reading-based, theme-focused projects typically assigned in ENG 104, which culminates with an essay that reports on and assumes a stance toward some topic of public import. Activities intended to highlight and develop particular literacy skills and capacities were represented as purpose-driven,

requisites to the completion of the project. The students undertook regular, reiterated work in reading (i.e. construing, interpreting, applying, and managing texts). Students began with work on features typical to general analytical nonfiction writing (e.g. movement between general and specific within and across paragraphs; difference between fact and opinion; words and views reported from others in relation to a writer's own words and views). They then proceeded through methods of working with texts (e.g. glossing, paraphrase, summary, quotation, comparison, commentary). Attention to grammar was featured in class sessions, which focused on the form and construction of sentences (e.g. focusing on such general elements as clauses and phrases, emphasis and subordination, given and new information in sentence development). Students were expected to complete the writing project for the course through drafts, with the instructor guiding revisions in one-on-one settings. The Writing Center was also available to students throughout the course for additional support.

Course grades were drawn from the following four components: weekly assignments in writing on readings; writings toward the course project (invention and planning activities, draft sections, full essay drafts); activities in sentence development and other discrete skills; and the final project essay. Student learning outcomes are described as follows:

**ENGAGEMENT**

- Calls on personal experience and reflection.
- Uses first-person narration.
- Develops audience awareness.

**STRUCTURE**

- Includes an effective introduction and conclusion.
- Uses narrative, definition, and analysis.
- Introduces writing modes such as compare/contrast, cause and effect, classification, and argument,
  which may be utilized at the student's discretion.
- Emphasizes paragraph development and transitions between paragraphs.
- Invites the incorporation of a visual aid (photograph, chart, etc.).

**ANALYSIS**

- Analyzes personal experience and shared readings.

**EVIDENCE**

- Uses personal experiences, fieldwork in the form of at least one interview, and shared readings.
- Incorporates and acknowledges sources.
- Summarizes, paraphrases, and quotes from shared readings.

**STYLE (AND GRAMMAR)**

- Writes descriptive prose.
- Uses correct spelling and proper punctuation.
- Experiments with sentence variety.

**CONVENTIONS**

- Acknowledges sources.
- Introduces bibliography.

**Placement Criteria**

Table 2

*English Placement Recommendations for Freshmen (Fall 2009)*

| ACT/SAT | COMPASS | Placement |
|---|---|---|
| ACT - 17 and below<br>SAT - 440 and below | 0-69<br>Writing | UK A&S 100 sections 025 – 028<br>Writing Readiness Workshop (1 credit) |

**Additional ARP Options for English**

Completion of learning contract activities planned and assessed in the PLATO Writing Series curriculum tracks.
For additional information, visit the UK website on the ARP online tutoring curriculum offerings available at http://www.uky.edu/UGS/Documents/Curriculum.pdf.

**Results**

Four sections of Supplemental English (A&S 100) serviced ARP students (n=43) during the Fall 2009 semester. No Supplemental English courses were offered during the Spring 2010 semester, which resulted in a total student enrollment of n=43 for the 2009-2010 academic year. Table 3 below provides the success rates of ARP students enrolled in the Supplemental English course based on course completion rates and obtaining a grade of at least 70% or higher. The table also indicates the number of students who enrolled in ENG 104 for the Spring 2010 semester.

Table 3

*Fall 2009 Grades for ARP Students Enrolled in Supplemental English (Fall 2009)*

| Students in Section | Grade: ABC | Grade: DEW | ENG 104 (Spring 2010) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 025 (n=12) | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| 026 (n=7) | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| 027 (n=12) | 9 | 3 | 8 |
| 028 (n=12) | 12 | 0 | 9 |
| Totals (n=43) | 35 | 8 | 32 |

There was one student who took ENG 104 concurrently with the Supplemental Writing course (A&S 100) during the Fall 2009 semester. This student completed the course earning a D as a final grade. Additionally, two students enrolled in ENG 102 during the Spring 2010 semester; both completed with a grade of C for the course. A total of five students, two of whom were placed on Academic Probation at the end of the Fall 2009 semester, did not enroll in the Spring 2010 semester.

**READING**

The Academic Readiness Reading Lab (A&S 100 and GEN 109) was designed to improve an ARP student's proficiency in reading strategies, learning strategies, and study strategies within the context of

the disciplinary course requirements of the University Studies Program. Reading strategies taught in this intervention course (one credit hour per week) were applied to college-level reading materials from linked courses in History, Sociology, Anthropology, and Agricultural Studies.

Course grades were comprised of the following components: Class work/participation (10%); Quizzes (40%); and Reading Dossier in correlation with paired content course (50%). The Reading Lab content was based on the following learning outcomes.

Read with comprehension

4. Identify main ideas in selected readings.
5. Recognize common prefixes, roots, and suffixes to determine word meanings.
6. Identify patterns in texts to improve comprehension.

Write clearly

4. Summarize and paraphrase texts without plagiarizing.
5. Combine information from different sources in a summary.

Apply critical thinking skills

6. Use context clues to understand new vocabulary.
7. Analyze texts to distinguish fact and opinion.
8. Recognize alternate viewpoints in selected readings.

Apply learning

9. Apply critical reading skills while reading content course textbooks.
10. Develop reading study strategies for reading content course textbooks.
11. Access an online library tutorial and apply those skills to perform research and locate readings in the Online Library Database.
12. Create a reading dossier by applying the reading and study strategies learned in the Reading Lab course to selected readings in the linked content course.

**Placement Criteria**

Table 4

*Reading Placement Recommendations for Freshmen (Fall 2009)*

| ACT | COMPASS | SAT* | Placement Recommendation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 17-19 | 75-85 | 411-470 | Enrolled in one of four targeted courses paired with one hour reading lab.<br>• Students are taught by trained TA's using course materials.<br>• Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of student progress through portfolio. |
| 14-16 | 64-74 | 351-410 | Enrolled in targeted course with paired one hour reading lab<br>• In addition: Independent Online Intervention (PLATO) 2 hours week minimum for semester |
| < 13 | <63 | <350 | Enrolled in targeted course with paired one hour reading lab<br>• In addition: Enrolled in Reading Clinic during Spring 2010 semester for intensive one on one skill and strategy development<br>o Limited to 10 students in clinic |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | o Minimum 2 hours week in clinic |

*This table represents most common cut-offs in use for college placement classes. SAT=480 is seen as being "college ready" in reading

**Additional ARP Options for Reading**

Completion of learning contract activities planned and assessed in any of the PLATO reading curriculum modules, including the following areas: vocabulary and reading comprehension, fundamental/intermediate/advanced reading strategies, and reading for information WorkSkills curriculum. For more information, see the UK website on the ARP online tutoring curriculum offerings (see http://www.uky.edu/UGS/Documents/Curriculum.pdf). Additionally, students in the Reading Labs were administered pre- and post-tests in the PLATO College Reading curriculum and the ACT COMPASS Reading Test.

***In-Seat Seminars and Online Webinars***

These seminars/webinars (whether in-seat or online) were designed to address specific reading, learning, and study strategies as an extension/reinforcement of the Reading Lab content. Reading Lab Teaching Assistants were encouraged to provide extra credit to students who attended one or more seminar sessions and to assign the webinars as homework as well as to reference the webinar content in class. One main goal of these learning experiences was to provide college-level reading instruction to a wider audience while addressing the needs of the students enrolled in the Reading Labs. Thus, the seminar/webinar sessions were widely publicized on campus and open to any and all University students. These sessions were based on the following instructional objectives:

- To help students learn how to effectively engage in college-level reading activities;
- To help students strengthen college-level reading skills and strategies;
- To develop college-level reading skills that enhances academic achievement thus reducing barriers that impede academic success; and
- To use technology to enhance college-level reading and research skills (webinars only).

***Reading Clinic Course (Spring 2010)***

The Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) targeted students for enrollment in the Reading Clinic course for Spring 2010 who either did not successfully complete ARP-targeted courses or who were placed on academic probation after Fall 2009 (or both). More specifically, six specific indicators related to underachievement of academic success assisted in the identification of students who would be enrolled in "*mandatory Spring 2010 college reading clinic sessions*" after experiencing limited academic success during the Fall 2009 semester. Table 5 below provides a description of the six specific placement indicators that were used and how many students were identified using each indicator for a total of seventeen (n=17) identified students.

Table 5

*Reading Clinic Placement Indicators for ARP Reading Students*

| Placement Indicators | # of stud |
|---|---|
| Reading Lab students who were unsuccessful in A&S 100 course (failed or received an incomplete) | |
| Reading Lab students who were successful in A&S 100 course but were placed on academic probation at the close of the Fall 2009 semester | |
| Reading Lab students who dropped A&S 100 course and did not successfully complete paired content course (failed) | |
| Students with COMPASS Reading score below cutoff, NOT placed in the Reading Lab (Fall 2009), failed one or more courses, but NOT on probation | |
| Students with COMPASS Reading score below cutoff, NOT placed in the Reading Lab (Fall 2009), placed on academic probation | |
| Students without COMPASS Reading score on file placed on academic probation at the close of the Fall 2009 semester | |

Following closer review of the students (n=17) identified for placement in the Reading Clinic course for Spring 2010, several students were eliminated from enrollment for a variety of reasons. Two students who were unsuccessful in the Reading Lab course during the Fall 2009 semester did not enroll in any courses for the Spring 2010 semester. Two students who received an "Incomplete" in the Reading Lab course were not placed on academic probation. One additional student was removed who dropped the Reading Lab course and failed the paired content course but was not placed on academic probation. Since there was no COMPASS reading score for this student, it was unclear whether placement in the Academic Readiness Program was appropriate. These eliminations left a total of twelve (n=12) students for enrollment in the Reading Clinic course for the Spring 2010 semester.

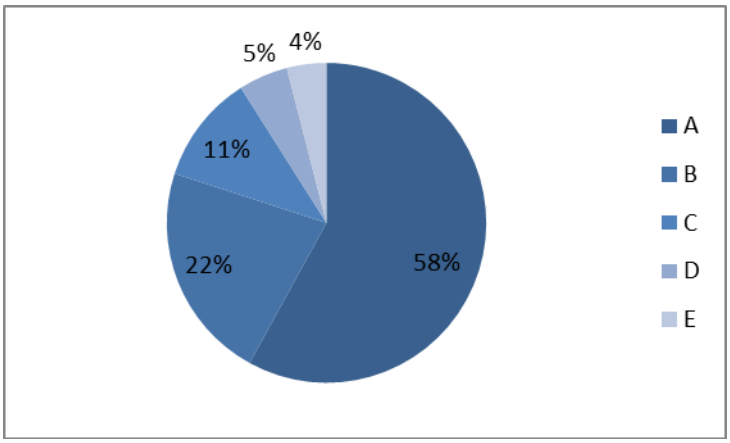
The Reading Clinic course provided two sections that met two days per week at a time that was coordinated with the identified students' course schedules to avoid conflicts with their other courses. Email communications were provided directly to each student from the Associate Provost of the Office of Undergraduate Education that recommended the student attend the scheduled Reading Clinic course in which he or she was enrolled and provided the date, time, and location of the session. Beginning with the first week of scheduled class meetings (January 19, 2010) through to the end of the semester (April 30, 2010), no students attended any of the Reading Clinic course sessions during the Spring 2010 semester.

**Results**

Fifteen sections of Supplemental Reading (A&S 100 and GEN 109) serviced ARP students (n=115) during the Fall 2009 semester. Two additional sections of a Supplemental Reading intervention were offered during the Spring 2010 semester, however no students were serviced through this course offering. Thus, the total student enrollment for developmental reading interventions was n=115 for the 2009-2010 academic year.

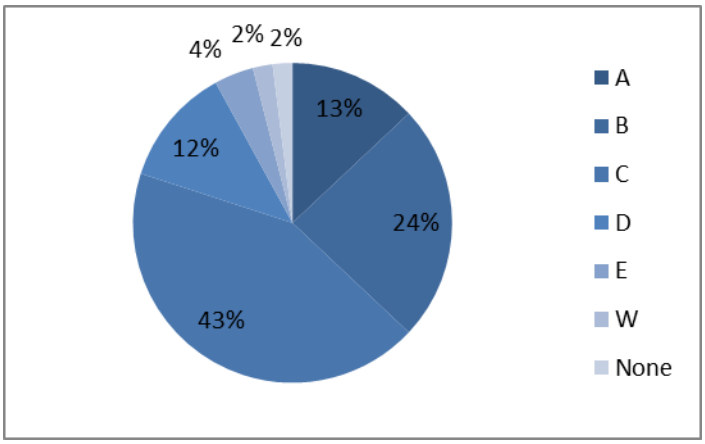
A total of 80 percent of the students earned either an A or B as their final grade in the Reading Lab course (see Chart 1 below). The majority of students (90%) enrolled in the Reading Labs earned a final grade of C or better. Four percent of the students received a failing grade (E).

*Chart 1. Final grades recorded for Reading Labs during Fall 2009 semester*




Basic frequency counts were computed for final grades in the content area courses linked to the Reading Labs (i.e. ANT160, HIS108, SOC101, or GEN 109). Chart 2 below provides a data display of the final grades for the paired content courses broken out by the percent of students earning each grade denomination. The chart also includes the percent of students who officially withdrew from the course (denoted with a "W").

*Chart 2. Final grades recorded for paired content courses during Fall 2009 semester*




*Note: 2 percent of the student population did not have a final grade recorded as identified by "none" in the chart above

The majority of students (79%) earned a final grade of C or better in the linked content courses, with a large portion (43%) earning a B and about a quarter of the students (24%) earning an A. Four percent of the students failed (grade = E), two percent "Withdrew" after midterm grades were posted, and no students were given an "Incomplete" for the course.

Overall, the majority of ARP students enrolled in the Reading Labs (71%) experienced academic success by earning a GPA of 2.0 or higher for the Fall 2009 semester.

**ACADEMIC CULTURE/COLLEGE READINESS**

Having ARP students understand and inculcate the academic expectations of the University is the fourth and final learning outcome of the Academic Readiness Program. The Office of Undergraduate Education

proposed the use of a Ning platform, the Big Blue Network (BBN), and Hobsons EMT communications software to introduce the entire cohort of ARP students to the academic culture of the University – both the academic expectations of faculty and the engagement strategies that undergird academic success. In particular, the following points of learning were introduced, developed, and assessed. Students who are successful in this aspect of the Academic Readiness Program will be able to:

- Demonstrate they understand the university's high expectations in terms of academic rigor; and,
- Express and exhibit an understanding of the importance of developing and maintaining active engagement in the co-curricular life of the university via regular and/or sustained participation in campus (online or offline) events and communities.

The learning outcomes included the following:

- Students will actively contribute to the conversations on the BBN site, including chat wall responses, discussion forum participation, and blogging;
- Students will join and contribute to the groups in BBN and respond to the Hobsons Retain conversational survey, showing personal attitudes and engagement with groups which enhance probability of academic success; and
- Students will "friend" on BBN student leaders/staff/faculty in areas related to their academic success.

Additionally, students had an opportunity to participate in the use of PLATO, Mathskeller, The Study, Career Center, Writing Center, In-seat Seminars, Online Webinars, and academic advising events as informal learning, self-directed improvement strategies as identified in the academic intervention areas above.

***Big Blue Network***

The Big Blue Network is an initiative of the Office of Undergraduate Education that works to improve the retention and success rates of University of Kentucky undergraduate students in support of the Provost's War on Attrition. Specifically, during the 2009-2010 academic year, the Big Blue Network focused on engaging the Fall 2009 incoming freshman cohort over the summer of 2009 and into the Fall 2009 semester.

As a part of the Office of Undergraduate Education's Office of Student Retention and Success, the efforts of the Big Blue Network are aimed at significantly improving the academic and social experience of students at the University of Kentucky. To this end, these social networking and social media retention efforts are framed in terms of a holistic approach to student success. The Big Blue Network is, in part, and acceptance of the Provost's challenge to dramatically improve first-year student retention and the six-year graduation rate.

The Big Blue Network was structured to support three of the five topical areas identified in the University of Kentucky Retention Strategic Plan 2009-2014:

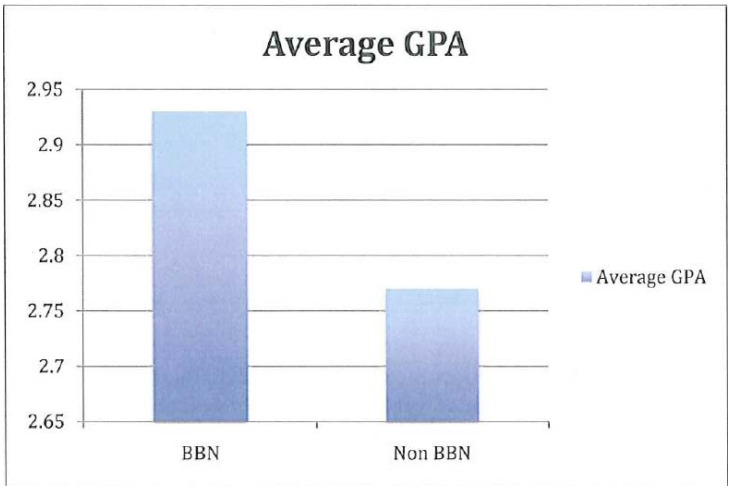
- High impact faculty-student interactions;
- Individual planning with professional academic advising and career counseling; and
- Robust and coherent preparedness for the rigor of academic life in a research institution.

**Results**

In 2009-2010, the Big Blue Network (BBN) attracted n=1,439 freshmen, approximately 1/3 of the Fall 2009 incoming cohort (n=4,111). Incoming freshman users of the BBN included 56.9 percent female students and 43.1 percent male students.

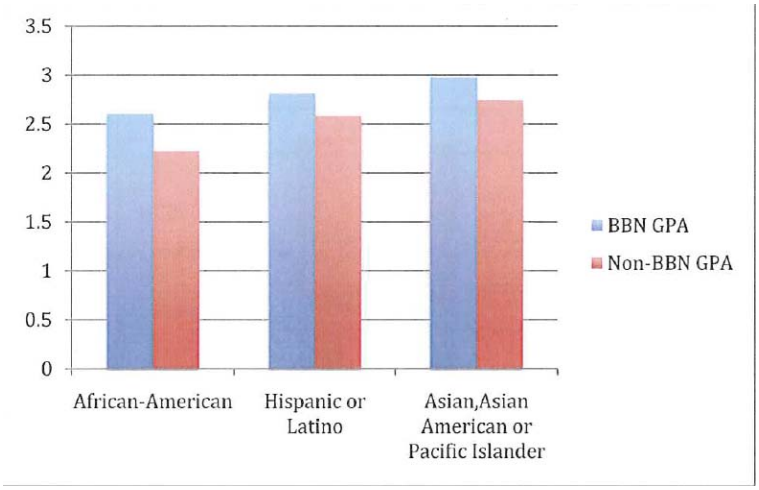
BBN participants showed a slightly higher GPA (2.93) for the Fall 2009 semester than non-BBN participants (2.77) as highlighted in Chart 3 below.

*Chart 3. Fall 2009 Average GPA of BBN Users Compared to Non-users*




There were significant differences between the GPAs of African-American, Hispanic, and Asian members of BBN and their non-BBN member counterparts as highlighted in Chart 4 below. In general, BBN minority student users out-performed the BBN minority student non-users by approximately one quarter of a grade point.

*Chart 4. Average GPA Comparisons between BBN Minority Student Users and Non-users*




There was a slight positive correlation between BBN membership and remaining in a full-time status. There was also a positive correlation between BBN membership and a better first-year GPA for five "at-risk" groups, including ARP students.

BBN membership did not necessarily result in participation in the site content (e.g. discussions, blog posts, groups). Participation rates were higher during the Summer 2009 and Fall 2009 months with these

rates falling off as time progressed through the semester. Regardless of specific emphases during training sessions, K Team leaders and UK 101 instructors did not utilize the BBN features as hoped.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR NEXT STEPS

Strategic planning for the Academic Readiness Program (ARP) for the 2010-2011 academic year focused on the following revisions and/or improvements in the four specific intervention areas:

### Mathematics

Placement of ARP students with specific needs in mathematics as described above will continue for the 2010-2011 academic year. The partnership with BCTC will continue to provide access to the developmental mathematics course (MA 108R), thus offering enough sections to service all incoming ARP freshman in need of this mathematics intervention.

Based on mathematics instructor/faculty feedback and analyses of the data associated with the ARP student performance, the following improvements will be made to the ARP mathematics components for the 2010-2011 academic year:

- Three new offerings in ARP mathematics under the umbrella of a new university course, UK 090;
- New mathematics UK 090 sections 001-004 mapped in course catalog to BCTC's MT 065 math course;
- Section 100 will be offered as an ARP math with self-paced instruction for those students who scored too low in COMPASS for placement into BCTC's MA 108R or MT 065;
- Section 110 will be offered as self-paced instruction for ARP MA 108R students with ACT math scores of 18 and above.

### English

Placement of ARP students in the Academic Readiness Writing Workshop will continue for the Fall 2010 semester. In addition, the Writing Workshop will be offered in the Spring 2011 semester as well in order to service a larger number of ARP students with English as an indentified deficit area.

Based on writing instructor/faculty feedback and analyses of the data associated with the ARP student performance, the following improvements will be made to the ARP writing components for the 2010-2011 academic year:

- Additional sections of the Supplemental Writing course will be offered to accommodate all ARP writing needs;
- Increased contact time for ARP students by extending class time from 50 minutes per week to 75 minutes per week (an increase of 50% or 25 minutes per week);
- Sought new classroom space to accommodate a more student-friendly class schedule since failure in the Monday classes in Fall 2009 was due primarily to absenteeism.

### Reading

The Reading Lab course linked with content area courses in History, Anthropology, and Sociology will continue for the Fall 2010 semester for students with reading deficits. A mandatory *College Reading Strategies* course (UK 100) is planned for the Spring 2011 semester. The Office of Undergraduate

Education is working closely with academic advisors to ensure enrollment of students who are not successful during the Fall 2010 semester (as previously outlined).

Based on reading instructor/faculty feedback and analyses of the data associated with the ARP student performance, the following improvements will be made to the ARP reading components for the 2010-2011 academic year:

- The Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) increased coordination efforts with academic advisors to ensure students enrolled in each section of the Reading Lab course were also enrolled in targeted sections of the linked content course. This scheduling strategy will provide an opportunity for the Reading Lab Teaching Assistants to work more closely with the content course readings, assignments, and assessment schedules that are common for most of the students enrolled in each of the Reading Lab sections.
- Participation in the PLATO online Reading Curriculum was removed from the Reading Lab course content as this component of the course resulted in unnecessary frustration for the students. Incoming freshman are still encouraged to use the PLATO curriculum as an intervention during Summer 2010 as an additional remediation option.

**Academic Culture/College Readiness**

The Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) will continue to explore social media engagement strategies under the Academic Success program and brand based on feedback from Big Blue Network members and participants (e.g. Facebook, blogs, Twitter, YouTube channels, electronic resource guides, Foursquare, etc.). The OUE will work with other programs related to undergraduate retention and success and college Deans to help them form their own social media engagement plans and encourage them to take ownership of their own space. Additionally, the OUE will continue to develop BBN as an alternate, secure resource for interested parties on campus.