



Research Brief #151

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Top Twenty Degree Applicable/Transfer-Level Courses with Low Success Rates: Fall 2014, 2015, and 2016

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At the request of the Abriendo grant project team, the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness conducted an analysis of student success rates in courses that are degree applicable/transfer-level. Related research conducted by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness includes Research Brief #47-*Top Twenty Courses with Historically Low Success Rates: Fall 2009, 2010 and 2011* (Parker, Meuschke, & Gribbons, 2013), *Supplemental Instruction Needs Assessment: Spring 2009* ad hoc report (Parker, et al., 2009), Research Brief #77-*Top Twenty Courses with Low Success Rates: Fall 2011, 2012, and 2013* (Meuschke, Gribbons, & Parker, 2015), and Research Brief #116-*Top Twenty Courses with Historically Low Success Rates: Fall 2014, 2015 and 2016* (Parker, et al., 2016). Results from the current analysis are intended to inform tutoring support funded by the Abriendo Caminos grant.

Upon review of the results, the following observations were made:

- Top 20 degree applicable/transfer level courses with the historically lowest success rates were:

COURSE	Course Title
COUNS-142	Learning to Learn
GERMAN-101	Elementary German
PHILOS-102	Introduction to Eastern Religion and Philosophy
ART-205	Landmarks of Art and Visual Culture
ASTRON-102	The Solar System
PHILOS-101	Introduction to Philosophy
HUMAN-150	Great Books, Great Ideas
KPET-201	Principles of Physical Fitness and Conditioning
WINEST-100	Wine Appreciation
ARCHT-110	Architectural Drafting I
GMD-120	History of Graphic Design
PHILOS-220	Comparative Religions
MATH-212	Calculus II
GMD-142	Digital Illustration
ITAL-101	Elementary Italian I
PHYSIC-220	Physics for Scientists and Engineers: Mechanics of Solids and Fluids
BIOSCI-106	Organismal and Environmental Biology
MATH-103	College Algebra
MATH-211	Calculus I
MATH-213	Calculus III

- Math courses among the top 20 degree applicable/transfer-level courses with the lowest success rates include: Calculus II (MATH-212), College Algebra (MATH-103), Calculus I (MATH-211), and Calculus III (MATH-213). The previous research study also included College Algebra (MATH-103), Calculus I (MATH-211), Calculus II (MATH-212), and Calculus III (MATH-213), in addition to Math Analysis (MATH-240) among the top 20 historically difficult courses.
- Other degree applicable/transfer-level math courses with low success rates, but not identified in the top 20 include: Math Analysis (MATH-240) and Trigonometry (MATH-102).
- Career Education (CE) courses in the top 20 historically difficult degree applicable/transfer-level courses include Wine Appreciation (WINEST-100), Architectural Drafting I (ARCHT-110), History of Graphic Design (GMD-120), and Digital Illustration (GMD-142). The previous research study also included History of Graphic Design (GMD-120) (Parker, et al., 2016).
- Other courses identified in the top 20 historically difficult degree applicable/transfer level course list that were also identified in the previous research were: Elementary German (GERMAN-101), Learning to Learn (COUNS-142), Great Books, Great Ideas (HUMAN-150), and Introduction to Eastern Religion and Philosophy (PHILOS-102) (Parker, et al., 2016).
- Counseling-142, German-101, and Calculus II were also among the top 20 courses with the highest proportion of W/FWs (Saxena, Meuschke, and Gribbons, 2017)

Table 1 All Courses with Historically Low Success Rates*: Fall Terms (2014, 2015, and 2016)

Course	Course Title	Success Rate	100% Online Offering
COUNS-142	Learning to Learn	49%	Yes
GERMAN-101	Elementary German	52%	No
PHILOS-102	Introduction to Eastern Religion and Philosophy	55%	No
ART-205	Landmarks of Art and Visual Culture	56%	Yes
ASTRON-102	The Solar System	57%	Yes
PHILOS-101	Introduction to Philosophy	57%	Yes
HUMAN-150	Great Books, Great Ideas	58%	Yes
KPET-201	Principles of Physical Fitness and Conditioning	58%	Yes
WINEST-100	Wine Appreciation	58%	No
ARCHT-110	Architectural Drafting I	59%	No
GMD-120	History of Graphic Design	59%	Yes
PHILOS-220	Comparative Religions	59%	Yes
MATH-212	Calculus II	60%	No
GMD-142	Digital Illustration	61%	No
ITAL-101	Elementary Italian I	61%	No
PHYSIC-220	Physics for Scientists and Engineers: Mechanics of Solids and Fluids	61%	No
BIOSCI-106	Organismal and Environmental Biology	62%	No

Course	Course Title	Success Rate	100% Online Offering
MATH-103	College Algebra	62%	No
MATH-211	Calculus II	62%	No
MATH-213	Calculus III	62%	No
PHILOS-120	Introduction to Ethics	62%	No
BUS-140	Principles of Marketing	63%	Yes
HIST-170	Role of Women-History of US	63%	Yes
MUSIC-105	Music Appreciation	63%	Yes
PHOTO-140	History of Photography	63%	Yes
CMPNET-151	CCNA Prep 1	64%	No
COMS-260	Communication and Gender	64%	Yes
KPET-200	Introduction to Kinesiology	64%	No
MATH-240	Math Analysis-Business/Social Sciences	64%	No
PHOTO-155	Photography	64%	No
SOCI-230	Sociology of Sexualities	64%	Yes
BUS-211	Business Law	65%	Yes
CHEM-110	Introductory Chemistry	65%	No
COUNS-111	Introduction College & Strategies for Success	65%	Yes
FRNCH-101	Elementary French I	65%	No
HIST-102	Western Civilization: The Modern Era	65%	Yes
HIST-112	United States History II	65%	Yes
PHILOS-106	Critical Reasoning	65%	Yes
PHOTO-150	Intro to Cameras & Composition	65%	Yes
SOCI-210	Deviance, Crime/Social Control	65%	Yes
BIOSCI-201	Introduction to Human Anatomy	66%	No
BUS-201	Principles of Accounting I	66%	No
COUNS-100	Success Strat Reentry Adult	66%	Yes
COUNS-110	Career-Life Planning	66%	Yes
PARLGL-101	Introduction to Law	66%	No
PSYCH-105	Personal Growth & Adjustment	66%	No
PSYCH-235	Psychology of Gender Roles	66%	Yes
SOCI-103	Intimate Relationships/Families	66%	Yes
SPAN-101	Elementary Spanish I	66%	Yes
THEATR-110	Understanding Theatre	66%	Yes
BIOSCI-204	Human Anatomy/Physiology I	67%	No
CINEMA-122	History of Cinema	67%	No
MEA-110	Writing for Journalism & New Media	67%	No
MUSIC-107	History of Rock & Roll	67%	Yes
PSYCH-109	Social Psychology	67%	Yes
GMD-101	Introduction to Visual Communication	68%	No
HIST-111	United States History I	68%	Yes
HIST-161	World History I	68%	No
HLHSCI-151	Emergency Medical Technician I	68%	No
HUMAN-100	Intro to Studies in Humanities	68%	Yes

Course	Course Title	Success Rate	100% Online Offering
PSYCH-101	Intro to Psychology	68%	Yes
CMPSCI-111	Intro Algorithms and Programming/Java	69%	No
COUNS-120	University Transfer Planning	69%	Yes
ECON-170	Economic History of the U.S.	69%	Yes
ESL-100	College Reading\writing IV	69%	No
MATH-102	Trigonometry	69%	No
PHILOS-230	Symbolic Logic	69%	No
SIGN-110	American Deaf Culture	69%	No
SOCI-110	Self and Society	69%	Yes
SOCI-150	Introduction to Criminology	69%	Yes
SOCI-200	Intro to Women's Studies	69%	Yes
SOCI-207	Social Problems	69%	Yes
SPAN-102	Elementary Spanish II	69%	Yes

*Success rates below 70 percent

Recommendations.

Upon review of the results, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration:

- Collaborate with faculty to identify which of the courses from table 1 is suitable for tutoring within the parameters of the Abriendo grant.
- Work with faculty to better understand the specific aspects of the courses in the top 20 list that are problematic for students, including reviewing results from course student learning outcomes (SLOs).
- Explore ways to market tutoring opportunities to instructors who teach courses identified in the top 20 list of courses with historically low success rates and students who enroll in them.
- Disseminate the results to department chairs and School deans so the results can be integrated with department SLO and program planning.

Methodology

- 1) To conduct the analysis, data were obtained through the College's 320 and Chancellor's Office USX referential files from Fall 2014, 2015 and 2016. Within these files, courses included in the analysis were identified by section type. To perform the analyses data obtained were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS, 2017) and Excel (2016).
- 2) Exclusions
 - a. In-service training and Cooperative Work Experience courses.
 - b. Courses with less than 4 sections offered when all fall terms included were combined.
 - c. Courses with less than 10 students enrolled.
 - d. Courses with only one semester of data.
- 3) Definitions for retention and success rates
 - a. **Course Retention** is defined as the percent of students retained in courses out of total enrolled in courses: Numerator = Number of students (duplicated) with A, B, C, D, F, I, CR/P, FW, NC/NP; Denominator = Number of students (duplicated) with A, B, C, D, DR, F, I, W, CR/P, FW, NC/NP. (This report uses the RP Group definition, which facilitates statewide comparisons.)

- b. **Course Success** is defined as the percent of students successful in courses out of total enrolled in courses: Numerator = Number of students (duplicated) with A, B, C, CR/P; Denominator = Number of students (duplicated) with A, B, C, D, DR, F, FW, CR/P, NC/NP, W, I. (This analysis uses the RP Group definition, which facilitates statewide comparisons.)
- c. **Historically Low Success Rates** is defined as courses with an average success rate of less than 70 percent over at least two Fall terms between 2014 and 2016.

References

- Meuschke, D.M., Gribbons, B.C., & Parker, C.A. (2015, January). Research Brief #77. Top twenty courses with low success rates: Fall 2011, 2012, and 2013.
- Parker, C.A., Meuschke, D.M. & Gribbons, B.C. (2013, January). Research Brief #47. Top twenty courses with historically low success rates: Fall 2009, 2010 and 2011.
- Parker, C.A., Meuschke, D.M. & Gribbons, B.C. (2009, July). Ad Hoc Report. Supplemental instruction needs assessment: spring 2009. College of the Canyons: Santa Clarita, CA.
- Saxena, P., Meuschke, D.M. & Gribbons, B.C. (2017, August). Research Brief #141. Proportion of “W”s in fall 2016 courses. College of the Canyons: Santa Clarita, CA.

For more detailed information on this research brief, stop by the Institutional Research office located in BONH-224, or call Catherine Parker, Research Analyst at 661.362.5879 or Daylene Meuschke, Dean of Institutional Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness at 661.362.5329.