

PROJECT OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION PLAN - Basic Skills Project, 2008-2009

Project: Adult High School Diploma Program

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 Amount Funded: \$90,000.00
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1. Project Goals	2. Specific outcomes to be measured	3. Method of assessment	4. Results reported	5. Use of results
<p>The Continuing Education division has a goal of managing faculty and student expectations in keeping with effective practice A.7 of the Basic Skills Initiative.</p>	<p>The Continuing Education staff will build value into its program by examining: 1) Adult High School Diploma students' expectations of success and 2) self-efficacy both within and outside of the school environment. It is hoped that by understanding expectations and self-efficacy, the Adult High School Diploma Program (AHSD) will be able to determine potential barriers to success.</p>	<p>A quantitative study will be conducted by the Research Office to examine Adult High School Diploma students' self-efficacy beliefs about their success and learning styles both within and outside of the school environment. Students will also be asked about their current and future academic intentions. Using data from the questionnaire, the research office will determine emerging themes via exploratory factor analysis and principal axis factoring. The emergent factors or content themes will help AHSD faculty and staff understand the larger content areas where self-expectations and efficacy tend to be most common among this population. This study will be conducted by Madelyn Arballo and Jennifer Tucker and will be completed by May 1, 2009.</p>	<p>Students were sampled in classrooms and tutoring areas (n= 155). Because of the transient nature of this population, it was difficult to determine the exact size of the targeted population. The factor analysis showed that: 1) Students' expectations emerged via self-efficacy factors including efficacy about: problem solving, being a resourceful student, ability to learn in multiple subjects, ask for help, concentrate and pay attention, resist peer pressure, and be assertive. 2) Self-efficacy outcomes such as being confident in completing five units, completing class assignment, and being able to check work completely were also assessed in relation to the abovementioned factors. It was found that confidence in completing units was most strongly correlated with one's self-efficacy in memory and attention ($r = .36, p < .01$), that efficacy about one's problem-solving in college was most strongly related to efficacy about daily assignment completion efficacy, and efficacy about checking work completely was most strongly correlated to efficacy about problem solving. Self-efficacy in AHSD unit completion was not correlated to beliefs about abilities in being a resourceful student and beliefs about resisting peer pressure. Efficacy in checking one's work in the AHSD program was not related to the students' beliefs in their ability to be resourceful or problem solvers. Taken together, the results indicate areas where there are disparities between the students' beliefs about their abilities and their abilities in the program. Interestingly none of the self-efficacy beliefs were correlates of unit completion, or use of tutoring. Such findings represent a disconnect between self-beliefs and actual behaviors. Further investigation is needed among this at-risk population.</p>	<p>Examine and update the Adult High School Diploma program curriculum to include more problem solving type activities, including study skills which are hoped to increase the students' efficacy. There are also plans to develop a tutor training that includes assisting the students in being problem solvers, improving memory and attention skills, stronger independent learners who take control of their own learning, and better resource managers. This could be followed up with a research study to examine the benefits of this intervention. Open discussion with students regarding peer pressure and the importance of resisting negative peer influences. This could include student discussion groups, leadership opportunities for students, recruiting more students for the mentoring program, advisory group formation, and counseling sessions focused on discussing this issue. Professional development that would provide the results of this study to faculty and support staff so that they may consider other interventions in response to these findings. Conduct further research on low performing male students (high school dropouts) and what interventions have been successful.</p>