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ABSTRACT

In order to measure the academic success/failure rate of students reading below the ninth grade level, all freshmen students entering Cosumnes River College were given the Nelson-Denny Reading Test during college registration in August 1974. Of the approximately 650 students tested, 113 (17 percent) scored 41 or below; this score corresponds to a grade placement score of eight years and nine months reading ability. By the end of the semester, 69 (61 percent) of these 113 students were subject to probation, on probation, or had withdrawn from college; 70 students (62 percent) had a progress point average (PPA) of 1.99 or below, less than a "C" average; and 42 students (37 percent) had a PPA of .99 or below, less than a "D" average. Students who were tested as reading at the eighth grade level (8.1-8.9) and who also enrolled in a remedial English course showed a failure rate of 33 percent as compared to 59 percent for students who were tested as reading at the same level and who did not enroll in a remedial English course. Students who were tested as reading at below the eighth grade level failed at the same rate (64-70 percent) whether or not they enrolled in a remedial English course. Further results indicate that reading level is a good predictor of academic success for students who take six or more units, but is a poor predictor of success for students taking five units or less. (DC)

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READING RELATIONSHIP STUDY

*Success/Failure Rate of First  
Semester College Students  
Identified as Poor Readers*

COSUMNES RIVER COLLEGE  
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The sign above the door reads "Open --- to any high school graduate or any non-high school graduate, 18 years of age or older who can demonstrate that he/she is able to profit by the instruction."

Should it read "Open --- to any student who can demonstrate his/her proficiency in reading and communication skills that will allow the student to perform at the community college level." Is this a more honest statement of the facts?

Unless the present community college admissions policy is changed many students who are being encouraged to apply are expected to compete in the college environment beyond his/her present level of demonstrated ability in the basic learning skills --- reading and writing. This study was conducted to measure the academic success/failure rate of those students who were identified, at the time of registration, as reading below the ninth grade level.

QUESTION:

1. If a student scores below the 9th grade reading level on a standardized reading test administered at the time of registration, is there a relationship between the test results and success in the academic program which the student selects during the first semester in college?
2. Do the remedial courses in which these students may enroll during the first semester of college effect their chance for academic success?
3. Does the number of academic units in which these students enroll have any relationship to scholastic success during the first semester in college?

PROCEDURE:

1. All entering freshmen were tested during college orientation in August 1974. Approximately 650 students were tested.
2. Of the students tested, 113 (17% of total) scored 41 or below on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test and were therefore included in the sample. This score corresponded to a grade placement score of 8 years and 9 months reading ability.
3. Students selected were followed during the fall semester 1974. Progress reports were reviewed on the 4th week, 16th week, and a final report card received at the end of the fall semester.
4. Students were classified by reading level and by the academic program which they selected for the fall semester. Students were also classified showing whether they had enrolled in remedial English courses.
5. At the end of the fall semester student progress was tabulated to determine:
  - a. Scholastic achievement.
  - b. Progress point average.

SUCCESS RATE BY READING LEVEL AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Category 2 and 4 (student taking 6 or more academic units)

<u>GRADE PLACEMENT</u>	<u>READING LEVEL</u>	<u>Total in CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>Failures (DR/P/SP)</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
(6.6 - Below)	A	16	12	75%
(7.9 - 6.8)	B	18	11	61%
(8.9 - 8.1)	C	$\frac{27}{61}$	$\frac{10}{33}$	37%

Category 1 and 3 (student taking 5 or less academic units)

(6.6 - Below)	A	26	18	69%
(7.9 - 6.8)	B	13	9	69%
(8.9 - 8.1)	C	$\frac{13}{52}$	$\frac{9}{36}$	69%

Research seems to indicate that the reading level as indicated on a test of reading ability is a good predictor of academic success for students who take 6 or more academic units but is a poor predictor of success for students taking 5 units or less.

SUCCESS RATE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED OR NOT ENROLLED IN REMEDIAL ENGLISH

Classification 1-2 (Students not enrolled in remedial English)

<u>GRADE PLACEMENT</u>	<u>READING LEVEL</u>	<u>Total in CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>Failures (DR/P/SP)</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
(6.6 - Below)	1A (5 units or less)	12	8	70%
	2A (6 units or more)	$\frac{5}{17}$	$\frac{4}{12}$	
(7.9 - 6.8)	1B (5 units or less)	4	2	64%
	2B (6 units or more)	$\frac{10}{14}$	$\frac{7}{9}$	
(8.9 - 8.1)	1C (5 units or less)	9	7	59%
	2C (6 units or more) (Academic Units)	$\frac{13}{22}$	$\frac{6}{13}$	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<u>53</u>	<u>34</u>	

47% of total sample (113 students) were not enrolled in remedial English courses.

Classification 3-4 (Students enrolled in remedial English)

(6.6 - Below)	3A (5 units or less)	14	10	70%
	4A (6 units or more)	$\frac{11}{25}$	$\frac{8}{18}$	
(7.9 - 6.8)	3B (5 units or less)	9	7	65%
	4B (6 units or more)	$\frac{8}{17}$	$\frac{4}{11}$	
(8.9 - 8.1)	3C (5 units or less)	4	2	33%
	4C (6 units or more) (Academic Units)	$\frac{14}{18}$	$\frac{4}{6}$	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<u>60</u>	<u>35</u>	

53% of total sample (113 students) were enrolled in remedial English courses.

Research seems to indicate that students who were tested as reading at the 8th grade level or above and if they also enrolled in a remedial English course, showed a lower failure rate (33%) than those students who were tested as reading at the 8th grade level and above but who were not enrolled in a remedial English course.

The data seems to indicate also that students who were tested as reading at the 8th grade level or below, failed at the same rate (64% - 70%) whether or not they enrolled in a remedial English course.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

1. At the end of the fall semester, of the 113 students selected for the study, 69 students, (61%) were subject to probation, on probation, or had dropped from college.  
24 students were subject to probation.  
25 students were on probation.  
20 students were dropped from college.
2. At the end of the fall semester, of the 113 students selected for the study, 70 students, (62%) posted a P.P.A. of 1.99 or below, less than a "C" average.
3. At the end of the fall semester, of the 113 students selected for the study, 42 students, (37%) posted a P.P.A. of .99 or below, less than a "D" average.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS WHICH COULD BE ASKED:

1. Is there a need for a specialized coordinated basic skills program for students identified as academically disadvantaged?
2. Should students who are identified as reading below a certain grade level be required to take basic learning skills courses?
3. Should students who are identified as reading below a certain grade level be required to pre-register with a counselor?

APPENDIX A

Student classification by reading level and academic units.

- 1C - Student enrolled in 5 academic units or less, not enrolled in remedial English, tested reading score 8.1 - 8.9.
- 2C - Student enrolled in 6 academic units or more, not enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level 8.1 - 8.9.
- 3C - Student enrolled in 5 academic units or less, is enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level 8.1 - 8.9.
- 4C - Student enrolled in 6 academic units or more, is enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level is 8.1 - 8.9.
- 1B - Student enrolled in 5 academic units or less, not enrolled in remedial English, tested reading score 6.8 to 7.9.
- 2B - Student enrolled in 6 academic units or more, not enrolled in remedial English, tested reading score 6.8 to 7.9.
- 3B - Student enrolled in 5 academic units or less, is enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level 6.8 to 7.2.
- 4B - Student enrolled in 6 academic units or more is enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level is 6.8 to 7.9.
- 1C - Student is enrolled in 5 academic units or less, not enrolled in remedial English, tested reading scored 6.6 and below.
- 2C - Student is enrolled in 6 academic units or more, not enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level 6.6 and below.
- 3C - Student is enrolled in 5 academic units or less, is enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level 6.6 and below.
- 4C - Student is enrolled in 6 academic units or more, is enrolled in remedial English, tested reading level 6.6 and below.

APPENDIX B.  
Student Ranking by Reading Level

<u>Assigned Classification</u>	<u>N/D Raw Score</u>	<u>Grade Placement</u>	<u>Number</u>
C	41	8.9	7
	40	8.8	12
	39	8.6	7
	38	8.5	7
	37	8.3	5
	36	8.1	2
			<u>40</u>
B	35	7.9	5
	34	7.7	10
	33	7.5	3
	32	7.3	4
	31	7.1	2
	30	7.0	3
	29	6.8	4
			<u>31</u>
A	28	6.6	4
	27	8	3
	26		4
	25		5
	24		6
	23		5
	22		1
	21		4
	19		2
	18		2
	17		1
	15		2
	9		1
			<u>42</u>



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APPENDIX C  
Scholastic Probation (Drop, Subject to Probation, Probation) by Scholastic Classification  
SUBJECT

Student Classification	Units	Grade Placement	Total	DROP		FROB		PROB		TOTAL		
				M	F	M	F	M	F			
Not Enrolled remedial English	1C	8.1-8.9	9	5	4	1	3	2	-	1	-	7
	2C	8.1-8.9	13	4	9	1	1	1	-	-	3	6
	3C	8.1-8.9	4	2	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
	4C	8.1-8.9	14	10	4	1	-	-	2	-	1	4
		TOTAL	40	21	19	4	4	3	3	1	4	(19)
Not Enrolled remedial English	1B	6.8-7.9	4	2	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
	2B	6.8-7.9	10	3	7	-	-	1	2	2	2	7
	3B	6.8-7.9	9	6	3	2	-	2	1	2	-	7
	4B	6.8-7.9	8	6	2	1	-	1	-	1	1	4
		TOTAL	31	17	14	3	1	4	4	5	3	(20)
Not Enrolled remedial English	1A	6.6 Below	12	10	2	4	1	2	1	-	-	8
	2A	6.6 Below	5	2	3	-	-	1	1	-	2	4
	3A	6.6 Below	14	10	4	-	2	3	-	4	1	10
	4A	6.6 Below	11	9	2	1	-	1	1	4	1	6
		TOTAL	42	31	11	5	3	7	3	8	4	(30)
GRAND TOTAL			113	69	44	20	24	25	69	25	69	

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 5 ACADEMIC UNITS OR LESS

	No English	English	TOTAL
4.00	2		
3.50			
3.49			
3.00			
2.99	2	4	6
2.50			
2.49	4	5	9
2.00			
1.99	1	4	5
1.50			
1.49	3	4	7
1.00			
.99	13	11	24
.00			

	1 A.B.C.	3 A.B.C.	53 TOTAL
DROP	11	7	18
SP	5	5	10
P	$\frac{1}{17}$	$\frac{7}{19}$	$\frac{8}{36}$

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 6 ACADEMIC UNITS OR MORE

	No English	English	TOTAL
4.00			
3.50			
3.49	1	3	4
3.00			
2.99		3	3
2.50			
2.49	9	10	19
2.00			
1.99	2	8	10
1.50			
1.49	3	3	6
1.00			
.99	12	6	18
.00			

2 A.B.C.

4 A.B.C.

60 TOTAL

DROP  
SP  
P

3  
5  
9  
17

3  
5  
8  
16

6  
10  
17  
33

Scholastic Classification and Progress Point Average (PPA)

ALL STUDENTS

Reading Level 8.9 and Below

<u>P.P.A.</u>					<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
4.00	(2)				2	(2%)
3.50						
3.49		(1)		(3)	4	(3%)
3.00						
2.99	(2)		(4)	(3)	9	(8%)
2.50						
2.49	(4)	(9)	(5)	(10)	28	(25%)
2.00						
1.99	(1)	(2)	(4)	(8)	15	(13%)
1.50						
1.49	(3)	(3)	(4)	(3)	13	(12%)
1.00						
.99	(13)	(12)	(11)	(6)	42	(37%)
.00						

1A  
1B  
1C

2A  
2B  
2C

3A  
3B  
3C

4A  
4B  
4C

113

Student Classification and Progress Point Average (PPA)

Student Reading Level Grade 8.9 - 8.1

4.00 3.50	2				2
3.49 3.00				3	3
2.99 2.50			1	2	3
2.49 2.00		7	1	4	12
1.99 1.50	1			2	3
1.49 1.00	1	1		1	3
.99 .00	5	5	2	2	14

1C

2C

3C

4C

40

**Student Classification and Progress Point Average (PPA)**

**Student Reading Level Grade 7.9 - 6.8**

4.00 3.50					
3.49 3.00					
2.99 2.50					
2.49 2.00	2	2	3	4	2
1.99 1.50		2	1	3	6
1.49 1.00		2	2		4
.99 .00	2	3	4	1	10
	<b>1B</b>	<b>2B</b>	<b>3B</b>	<b>4B</b>	<b>31</b>

**Student Classification and Progress Point Average (P.P.A.)**

**Students reading level Grade 6.6 - Below**

4.00					
3.50					
3.49					
3.00		1			1
2.99					
2.50	2		3	1	6
2.49					
2.00	2		1	2	5
1.99					
1.50			3	3	6
1.49					
1.00	2		2	2	6
.99					
.00	6	4	5	3	18

1A

2A

3A

4A

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