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ABSTRACT

In 1984-85, Miami-Dade Community College's (MDCC's) North Campus developed a one-credit orientation course (SLS 1101) to provide students with information and college-level skills before they encounter problems. A study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of SLS 1101 in reducing attrition and increasing grade point average (GPA) over the course of a year. The study population (N=2,008) included all North Campus students who enrolled for the first time in fall 1985 and reported plans to pursue an associate degree, whether they enrolled in SLS 1101 (N=1,145) or did not (N=863). Study findings included the following: (1) in comparison to students who did not enroll in SLS 1101, the SLS enrollees were more likely to be U.S. Black non-Hispanics of traditional college-going age taking fewer than 12 credits and seeking an associate in arts degree; (2) in fall 1986, 67% of the SLS students were still enrolled at MDCC, compared to 46% of those who had not taken the course; (3) re-enrollment rates were consistently higher for the SLS students whether the comparison with non-SLS students was based on ethnicity, gender, number of credits taken, degree sought, or citizenship status, (4) at the end of the first semester, 68% of the SLS enrollees and 56% of the non-SLS students had GPA's of 2.0 or higher; however, by the end of the first year the gap between the two groups had narrowed to 60% vs. 56%; and (5) 75% of the SLS students felt they were more likely to survive at MDCC because of the course. The SLS 1101 syllabus and evaluation form are appended. (EJV)

ADDRESSING RETENTION THROUGH AN ORIENTATION COURSE: RESULTS FROM A NORTH CAMPUS STUDY

Research Report No. 87-24

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Miami-Dade Community College

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Abstract

The students attending the North Campus of Miami-Dade Community College exhibit many of the behaviors that research studies have identified as characteristic of students at risk for dropping out of college. Over the past ten years, several strategies have been used to address the problems of both properly orienting entering North Campus students to college life and reducing attrition. Recently, Miami-Dade Community College North Campus developed a one-credit orientation course to provide students with information and skills they need to survive college before they experience problems. As part of the course, faculty members who teach the course also serve in mentor roles to support the students during their first semester in college--a vulnerable period in their academic life.

The course was piloted and refined in the Winter of 1984. During the 1985 Fall term, the campus required SLS 1101 for all first-time-in-college students. The text was Becoming a Master Student by David Ellis (1985). Each participant's learning goals were individualized based on an initial needs assessment, and the text addressed the problems and needs of both traditional and non-traditional students. The instructors covered a number of structured topics from the book and provided the students with a variety of campus-based information.

The purpose of this study was to assess the initial effectiveness of the orientation course, SLS 1101, in reducing attrition and increasing grade point average (GPA) over the course of a year. In addition, students were asked to evaluate the course based on its effectiveness in meeting stated course goals. The analysis was limited to students who enrolled in college for the first time for the Fall term of 1985 at the North Campus and who reported that they planned to pursue either an A.A. or an A.S. degree. This group was followed through the end of the Fall 1986 term, producing results covering three major terms as well as the summer. Of the 2,008 students included in the study, 1,145 (57%) enrolled in the course and 863 (43%) did not.

This note of optimism, however, must be tempered by the fact that we were unable to explain completely what prior differences existed between those students who enrolled in SLS 1101 and those who did not. There may have been a variety of other factors, particularly motivation and willingness to heed advice in general, that could also relate to future performance at the college. Also, faculty members recruited for the first implementation of the course may have been more enthusiastic and effective than faculty recruited for later terms when the course was more "institutionalized." In the meantime, however, the results seem to justify the North Campus mandate to enroll in this course.

This note of optimism, however, must be tempered by the fact that we were unable to explain completely what prior differences existed between those students who enrolled in SLS 1101 and those who did not. There may have been a variety of other factors, particularly motivation and willingness to heed advice in general, that could also relate to future performance at the college. Also, faculty members recruited for the first implementation of the course may have been more enthusiastic and effective than faculty recruited for later terms when the course was more "institutionalized." In the meantime, however, the results seem to justify the North Campus mandate to enroll in this course.

Addressing Retention Through an Orientation Course:
Results From a North Campus Study

Introduction

Finding ways to help students complete their education is a continuing problem which affects all educational levels. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, about 27 percent of high school students dropout before graduation, and there has been a five percent increase in that percentage from 1972 to 1982. Of the number that do graduate from high school, about one-half move directly into some type of post-secondary education, but only 26 percent of that group complete a baccalaureate degree (Plesko & Stern, 1985).

Cope and Hannah (1975) indicate that the dropout rate for students in the community college is significantly higher than for students at a four-year institution. Approximately 50 percent of community college students remain after their first year. Of those who remain, only 50 percent complete an associate degree. Less selective institutions such as open door community colleges seem to have the highest degree of attrition. Another factor influencing attrition at open door institutions is that most students do not actively select these institutions. In many cases, these institutions are attended because of easy access.

The literature identifies a number of variables which directly influence retention in college. Astin (1984), Tinto (1975), and Beal and Noel (1980) conclude that prior academic achievement and aptitude are the best predictors for dropout behavior in college. Family background variables indicate that children from lower socio-economic families exhibit higher rates of dropout than do children from higher socio-economic families even when intelligence has been taken into consideration (Sewell and Shah, 1967). While low socio-economic families may have the same beliefs in the importance and worth of education as middle socio-economic families, reality dictates a difference in priorities, and, many times, different educational opportunities.

Personality and attitudinal differences have also been noted between college persisters and dropouts. Dropouts tend to be more impulsive than persisters, lacking the emotional commitment to education. Such individuals also tend to be more unstable, more anxious, and more restless relative to their successful counterparts (Tinto, 1975).

Yet it is important to note that persistence in college relies upon more than the outcomes of personal characteristics, prior experiences, and prior commitments. College persistence is affected to a great degree by the process of interactions between the students and the institution. This process includes interactions with peers, faculty, and administration. In this model, dropout behavior is linked with the student's academic and social integration within an educational environment (Tinto, 1975). Academic integration is measured in terms of both the student's grade performance and his intellectual development during the college years. Social integration usually occurs through informal peer group associations, formal extracurricular activities, and interaction with faculty and administration within the college. Successful interactions in these areas result in enhanced social communication, peer support, faculty support, and a feeling of belonging. Each of these is seen as an important social reward that increases the student's perceptions of the benefits of college and, thus, increases commitment to completion. Meeting academic standards and attaining higher educational goals require a range of adult intellectual and social skills that are more complex than those called for in high school. It is apparent, especially at the community college, that not all individuals who gain entry possess those skills.

Thus, even though educators focus on the absence of academic skills as the predominant cause for dropout, evidence is available to show that social skills are equally important to persistence in college. The absence of social skills is particularly important in the failure to maintain adequate academic performance in college among the disadvantaged segment of the student body (Tinto, 1982).

The literature cites a number of strategies used by colleges and universities to address the academic and social integration of students into

an educational setting. Many colleges provide an orientation program to acquaint students with regulations, expected behavior, student services, and academic programs. Through this type of socialization process, students should become more successfully integrated into the educational setting, enhancing their ability to function (Pascarella, Terenzini, and Wolfle, 1986).

Although a plethora of orientation approaches are cited as positively impacting retention of students (Cuyjet & Rode, 1987, Chernin & Goldsmith, 1986; Bron & Gordon, 1986; Prola & Stern, 1984), the most effective strategies include a formal course during the first term of study (Beal & Noel, 1980). Within a community college setting, many of the students come from diverse backgrounds, are not sufficiently prepared academically, and have not had the experiences with which traditional college students are equipped. These "non-traditional" students need a greater amount of direction if they are going to survive. Upcraft et al. (1984) state that in order for colleges and universities to provide maximum opportunities for student achievement, an orientation program should be developed to compensate for student deficiencies.

The students attending the North Campus of Miami-Dade Community College exhibit many of the behaviors that are characteristic of potential dropouts. As an open-door institution, the College attracts a majority of students (greater than 60 percent) who are deficient in one or more of the basic skills (reading, writing, arithmetic).

Over the past ten years, a number of strategies have been used to address the problems of both properly orienting entering North Campus students to college life and reducing attrition. For a number of years, a three-day intensive college orientation seminar was scheduled prior to the commencement of classes. Offered on a voluntary basis, the orientation had an interpersonal component as well as components orienting students to the college mechanics and support systems. While reactions were generally favorable to this three-day orientation strategy, both students and teaching staff complained that it was too brief and too concentrated.

Responding to students' feedback on the content and delivery of their orientation course and to favorable reports from other colleges on their retention strategies, Miami-Dade Community College North Campus developed a one-credit college survival course. Conceptually, the College Survival Program was implemented as a front-loading proactive intervention rather than a reactive ex post facto intervention. For example, previous policy mandated the Student Development course, SLS 1501, for all students on academic probation. This policy was an attempt to correct or improve students' academic progress only after a student experienced difficulty. The front-loading approach is a strategy that "vaccinates" students in order to reduce their chances of incurring "academic difficulty" and/or experiencing the feeling of being isolated on a large campus.

In addition, each faculty member who taught the course also served in a mentor role. The mentorship component of the SLS 1101 College Survival course was aimed at supporting the students during the first semester in college--a vulnerable period in their academic life. Faculty were specifically selected for their skill in fulfilling this role. Faculty workshops were then held to further refine these mentoring as well as gain agreement on the basic goods and components of the course.

The course was piloted and refined in the Winter of 1984. During the 1985 Fall Term, the campus required SLS 1101 for all first-time-in-college students. The text was Becoming a Master Student by David Ellis (1985). Each participant's learning goals were individualized based on an initial needs assessment, and the text addressed the problems and needs of both traditional and non-traditional students.

The instructors covered a number of structured topics from the book and provided the students with a variety of campus-based information. The topics covered in the book included self evaluation, time management, memory, reading, note taking, tests, creativity, relationships, health, money and resources. The campus-based information focused on campus resources such as athletic and intramural activities, academic advisement, career center, counseling and testing, financial aid, library, student activities, and tutorial services. The student also reviewed information on

college systems and procedures such as registration, course and degree requirements, GPA requirements, the computerized advisement graduation information system (AGIS), standards of academic progress (SOAP), and State testing requirements.

The intent of utilizing this particular orientation model was to impact students positively with regard to their social and academic integration in the college. For further information on course structure and objectives, see the syllabus in Appendix A.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the initial effectiveness of the orientation course, SLS 1101, in reducing attrition and increasing grade point average (GPA) over the course of a year. Specifically, the questions addressed were:

1. Who enrolled in SLS 1101? Were there differences between those who enrolled and those who did not based on: gender ethnicity, age, number of credits taken first semester, degree sought, immigration status, and level of basic skills?

2. Of those who enrolled in SLS 1101, did they differ from students who did not in terms of:
   a. continued enrollment after one year;
   b. first-term grade point average;
   c. cumulative grade point average?

3. Did the students who enrolled in SLS 1101 think the course was worthwhile? What areas of strength and weakness did they identify?

Methodology

The analysis was limited to students who enrolled in college for the first time for the Fall term of 1985 at the North Campus and who reported that they planned to pursue either an A.A. or an A.S. degree. This group was followed through the end of the Fall 1986 term, producing results covering three major terms as well as the summer. Students were counted as enrolled in the Fall of 1986 only if they were enrolled during that term.

Therefore, students who might have been enrolled for one of the previous terms but "stopped out" during the fall would not be counted as enrolled.

Basic skills scores using the MAPS battery were available on about 75% of the 2,008 students included in the analysis. The level of basic skills was established by comparison to college-wide cutscores on the MAPS test. Students were assigned to college preparatory reading if their MAPS reading score was less than 12. They were assigned to college preparatory writing if their TSWE score was less than 30, and to college preparatory mathematics if their algebra score was less than 206 or their math score was less than 116.

Data were analyzed using the chi-square statistical technique and an alpha level of .05. The question of whether there were differences between those who did and did not enroll in SLS 1101 was addressed first. If students differed, for example, on ethnic composition between those that did and did not enroll in SLS 1101, further analysis of outcome measures (continued enrollment and GPA) was conducted separately for each group in order to account for the initial differences which could affect both retention and GPA.

The student questionnaire to evaluate the course was developed by the North Campus Advisement and Counseling Department and given to instructors to pass out to their students at the end of the term. Responses were received from 54% of the students enrolled.

Results

Who Enrolled?

As shown by Table 1, North Campus students do not reflect the traditional college-going population in many ways. Only 20% of the first-time enrollees were white non-Hispanic compared to 31% black non-Hispanic and 46% Hispanic. A majority was female (52%). Generally, however, they were young with 80% being 22 or less at the time of enrollment. Very few enrolled full-time; only 27% were carrying 12 or more credits during their semester. Most (70%) were seeking an A.A. degree. While 84% were

permanent residents, it should be noted that the 16% who were enrolled as refugees or on student visas is much higher than found at most institutions. As shown by Table 2, over half needed college preparatory work in reading or writing compared to 30% in algebra or math. Less than one-third passed all three basic skills areas while almost 20% needed work in all three areas.

Of the 2,000 students who enrolled in college at North Campus for the first time in the Fall of 1985, more than half (57%) were enrolled in the new orientation course, SLS 1101. Students who did not enroll did not "escape" the course randomly. As shown by Table 1, enrollees differed from non-enrollees based on ethnicity, age, number of credits taken, degrees sought in college, and immigration status. In fact, the only demographic variable that the groups did not differ on was gender. According to the table, students enrolled in SLS 1101 were more likely to be U.S. black non-Hispanics of traditional college-going age taking fewer than 12 credits and seeking an Associate in Arts degree.

As shown by Table 2, the two groups were more similar in terms of the level of basic skills that they brought to the College. The only differences found were on Algebra and Math where students above the cut were more likely to be enrolled in SLS 1101. Students who passed more parts of the basic skills test were more likely to be enrolled compared to those needing remediation.

Retention and Grade Point Average Results

One year later (Fall of 1986), 67% of the students who had had the orientation course were enrolled in college compared to 46% of those who had not taken the course; this difference was statistically significant (see Table 3). Since the previous analysis had shown, however, that there were other factors that the students brought with them to the institution that could affect their further enrollment at the College, a study of re-enrollment rates was therefore continued based on demographics and level of basic skills. As shown by Table 3, the re-enrollment rates were almost always consistently higher for those who had SLS 1101 compared to those who did not enroll whether that comparison was based on ethnicity, gender, number of credits taken, degree sought, or citizenship status. For example,

73% of the Hispanic students who had SLS re-enrolled compared to 46% of those who did not. Sixty-nine percent of those who sought an Associate Arts Degree who had SLS re-enrolled compared to 49% of those who did not.

Table 4 displays the impact of SLS 1101 and enrollment next Fall based on whether students entered the College above or below the cut on each and all of the placement tests. Again the results were consistent and complimentary of the effectiveness of the SLS 1101 course when it related to enrollment in college one year later.

A second variable of interest was grade point average, both during the first semester of enrollment and after students had accumulated credits across three or more semesters. Overall, a greater proportion of students that had the orientation course had at least a grade point average of 2.0 both at the end of their first semester and after one year. In general, 68% of the SLS enrollees had GPAs of 2.0 or more their first semester compared to 56% of the non-enrollees; 60% of the SLS enrollees still had a GPA of 2.0 or more after one year. These statistically significant results were not as consistent, however, as those found for the enrollment results when the analysis was extended to each subgroup (see Table 6).

By ethnicity, results varied widely. Black non-Hispanics who enrolled in SLS 1101 had higher grade point averages after their first semester compared to non-enrollees. These differences, however, had dissipated after one year so that instead of 66% of the first semester SLS group having GPAs of 2.0 or more, the percentage was 53% after one year. The pattern was different for white non-Hispanics; there were no differences in the percent having a GPA of 2.0 or more either the first semester or after one year. Hispanics, however, maintained differences between the enrollees and non-enrollees both first semester and after one year. After one year, 65% had GPAs of 2.0 or more compared to 57% of the non-enrollees.

By gender, initial differences between enrollees and non-enrollees were found for males and females. After one year, however, while the difference between the two groups remained for male students, it had dwindled to absolutely no difference at all for females.

In terms of age, differences were found between the enrollees and the non-enrollees for the traditional college-going age of 19 to 22 and for the older student (28 and above). In no case, however, did the distinctions between the enrollees and non-enrollees remain after one year.

Nor did number of credits taken the first term, an indication of full-time or part-time status, show a consistent pattern of results. While there was a difference between enrollees and non-enrollees for students taking 4 credits or less, the difference could perhaps be attributed to the grade they receive in SLS 1101; in any case, the distinctions disappeared after one year. The only other difference was for students who had enrolled in 12 or more credits their first semester where no difference showed up the first semester but it was there after one year. This result could be somewhat difficult to explain. In terms of degree sought, differences were found between enrollees and non-enrollees and the percent having a GPA of 2.0 or more both the first semester and after one year. For Associate of Science degree-seekers, however, the initial differences faded upon further study. The last category, immigration status, showed initial differences for U.S. citizens but again these differences faded after one year.

Similar results were again found when the group was divided based on entering level of basic skills and then comparisons were made between those who did and did not enroll in SLS 1101. With only one exception, students who enrolled in the orientation course had a higher percentage of first semester grade point averages above 2.0 than students who did not enroll. Again, these results had mainly dissipated after one year when the analysis was done on a subgroup basis. The only two areas out of ten analyses where differences remained were for students who scored above the cut on Reading and for students who passed two of the basic skills areas. See Table 6 for full results.

Course Evaluation of SLS 1101

Besides collecting student outcome information, students were also given an opportunity to give their impressions of the course; 54% of the students who enrolled turned in questionnaires which were analyzed by Advisement and Counseling on North Campus. A summary of the results can be

found in Appendix B. This discussion will focus on the highlights of that survey.

A large majority of the students agreed that the organization of the course was adequate, the objectives were understandable, and the ideas and activities presented during the course were appropriate. In each of these areas (see Questions 1 through 3), more than 70% of the students selected a response above the midpoint, an indication that they were pleased. Over 60% of the students thought that the amount of work required for the course was just about right (Question 4). The two questions on motivational level for participation and involvement in class (Questions 5 and 6) produced more variable responses. On each of these questions about one-third of the respondents thought that their level of involvement was about average and about 50% agreed that it was above average.

Three of the goals of the course were to give students information on campus resources, college mechanics, and learning skills. Three sections of the questionnaire addressed these issues. Under campus resources (Questions 7 through 14), students seemed to have very good knowledge at the end of the course of academic advisement, financial aid, and particularly the library. They still had inadequate information, they said, on athletic and intramural activities (22% rated inadequate), student activities (22% rated inadequate), and tutorial services (32% rated inadequate).

The issue of college mechanics was addressed in Questions 15 through 22. In general, a large majority of students agreed that they had good knowledge now of the registration process, course credits and programs, course and degree requirements, grade point average requirements, and the academic guidance and information system (only about 5% of the students rated their information as less than adequate in this area). The three major areas where students continued to have less than adequate information compared to the other areas were Standards of Academic Progress (SOAP) where 29% of the students rated their information as less than adequate, Academic Alert where 13% rated their information as less than adequate, and CLAST where 17% rated their information as less than adequate.

Under learning skills, the course syllabus stressed time management, note taking, and test taking as strategies to help survive in college. In all three areas students felt they had adequate information at the end of the semester. Only between 4% and 7% of the students rated their information as inadequate in any one of these three areas.

As a group, students seemed to have found the course to have been a valuable experience. A total of 62% rated the course as beneficial while only 3% rated it a complete waste of time (see question 23). When asked to compare the quality and benefit as a course compared to other coursework over half rated it as above while a quarter rated it below on quality and benefit (see question 24). As a final question, students were asked whether they thought as a result of the course they would be better able to survive at Miami-Dade (question 28). Three-quarters of the students gave a response that fell above the midpoint, and 25% answered at the highest level, "Very much so." Conversely, only 6% gave ratings below the midpoint and only 1% responded "Not at all."

Discussion

This study found that students who enrolled in SLS 1101, College Survival, were indeed more likely to survive college when survival was defined as continued enrollment one year later and a first-semester grade point average that exceeded 2.0. In general, 67% of the students who enrolled in SLS 1101 were still enrolled one year later compared to 46% of those who had not enrolled. At the end of the first semester, 68% of the SLS enrollees had GPAs that exceeded 2.0 compared to 56% of those who had not enrolled. On grade point average, however, results faded somewhat after one year. Though still significant one year later (60% versus 56%), the gap between the two groups had definitely narrowed.

Since enrollees differed from non-enrollees on a variety of entering demographic characteristics, analyses were also done for a number of subgroups. In general, the same results found for the total group were found within each subgroup. The one exception was for grade point average

after three major semesters; in this area the results were more likely to be nonsignificant or not readily explained.

According to course evaluations, students also found the course to be of value. Three-quarters thought that they were more likely to be able to survive at M-DCC because of the course. On most areas related to campus resources, college mechanics, and learning skills, students rated their information level as adequate or higher. The areas where students were least likely to have sufficient information were standards of academic progress (SOAP) and tutorial services.

It appears that SLS 1101, College Survival, did help students to remain in college--and outcome beneficial not only to the student but also to the institution. In fact, assuming the same retention rates, if all first-time-in-college North Campus enrollees had taken the course, 427 more students would still be enrolled one year later when compared to no one taking the course. With an average credit load of 9.0, in one semester the 427 "retainees" would generate 96 FTEs or almost $236,700 if the college moved outside its assigned enrollment corridor.

This note of optimism, however, must be tempered by the fact that we were unable to explain completely what prior differences existed between those students who enrolled in SLS 1101 and those who did not. There may have been a variety of other factors, particularly motivation and willingness to heed advice in general, that could also relate to future performance at the college. Also, faculty members recruited for the first implementation of the course may have been more enthusiastic and effective than faculty recruited for later terms when the course was more "institutionalized." In the meantime, however, the results seem to justify the North Campus mandate to enroll in this course.

Table 1

Differences in Enrollment in SLS 1101
Fall 1985 First-Time-in-College Students

Ethnic Category	SLS					
	Not Enrolled		Enrolled		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ethnicity						
Black Non-Hispanic	223	36.3	391	63.7	614	30.6
White Non-Hispanic	168	42.5	227	57.5	395	19.7
Hispanic	421	45.1	513	54.9	934	46.5
Other	51	78.5	14	21.5	65	3.2
Total	863	43.0	1,145	57.0	2,008	100.0
X^2= 46.2, d.f. = 3, p <.05.						
Gender						
Male	429	44.9	526	55.1	955	47.6
Female	434	41.2	619	58.8	1,053	52.4
Total	863	43.0	1,145	57.0	2,008	100.0
X^2 = 2.8, d.f. = 1, n.s.						
Age						
18 or Less	191	27.1	515	72.9	706	35.2
19 - 22	357	39.5	546	60.5	903	45.0
23 - 27	142	72.8	53	27.2	195	9.7
28 - or older	173	84.8	31	15.2	204	10.2
Total	863	43.0	1,145	57.0	2,008	100.0
X^2 = 296.4, d.f. = 4, p <.05.						
Number of Credits Taken First Term						
5 or Less	305	42.8	408	57.2	713	35.5
5 - 8	151	39.3	233	60.7	384	19.1
9 - 11	147	39.7	223	60.3	370	18.5
12+	260	48.1	281	51.9	541	26.9
Total	863	43.0	1,145	57.0	2,008	100.0
X^2 = 9.4, d.f. = 3, p<.05.						
Degree Sought						
Associate in Arts	542	38.5	865	61.5	1,407	70.1
Associate in Science	321	53.4	280	46.6	601	29.9
Total	863	43.0	1,145	57.0	2,008	100.0
X^2 = 38.1, d.f. = 1, p<.05.						
Immigration Status						
Visa/Refugee	210	64.6	115	35.4	325	16.2
U.S. Citizen or Immigrant Alien	653	38.8	1,030	61.2	1,683	83.8
Total	863	43.0	1,145	57.0	2,008	100.0
X^2 = 74.1, d.f. = 1, p<.05.						

Table 2

Differences in Enrollment in SLS 1101
By Entering Level of Basic Skills
Fall 1985 First-Time-in-College Students

	SLS					
	Not Enrolled		Enrolled		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Reading						
Below Cut	275	33.7	542	66.3	817	53.4
Above Cut	244	34.2	469	65.8	713	46.6
Total						
$X^2 = 0.1$, d.f. = 1, n.s.						
Writing						
Below Cut	256	33.3	513	66.7	769	50.3
Above Cut	263	34.6	498	65.4	761	49.7
$X^2 = 0.3$, d.f. = 1, n.s.						
Algebra or Math						
Below Cut	201	45.1	245	54.9	446	29.1
Above Cut	318	29.3	766	70.7	1,084	70.9
$X^2 = 34.9$, d.f. = 1, $p < .05$.						
Number of Areas Above Cut						
None	120	42.4	163	57.6	283	18.5
One	119	28.5	298	71.5	417	27.3
Two	134	38.4	215	61.6	349	22.8
All	146	30.3	335	69.7	481	31.4
$X^2 = 20.3$, d.f. = 3, $p<.05$.						

Table 3

Re-Enrollment After One Year Based on Enrollment in SLS 1101
And Demographic Characteristics
Fall 1985 First-Time-in-College Students

	Enrolled Next Fall		Number in Group	Chi Square	Significance p_.05
	Number	Percent			
Total					
No SLS	395	45.8	863	91.6	*
Had SLS	768	67.1	1,145		
Ethnicity					
Black Non-Hispanic					
No SLS	105	47.1	223	16.0	*
Had SLS	249	63.7	391		
White Non-Hispanic					
No SLS	68	40.5	168	13.9	*
Had SLS	135	59.5	227		
Hispanic					
No SLS	193	45.8	421	73.2	*
Had SLS	376	73.3	513		
Gender					
Male					
No SLS	183	42.7	429	37.6	*
Had SLS	329	62.6	526		
Female					
No SLS	212	48.9	434	52.7	*
Had SLS	439	70.9	619		
Age					
18 or Less					
No SLS	130	68.1	191	2.1	N.S.
Had SLS	379	73.6	515		
19 - 22					
No SLS	168	47.1	357	29.8	*
Had SLS	357	65.4	546		
23 - 27					
No SLS	49	34.5	142	0.8	N.S.
Had SLS	22	41.5	53		
28 - or older					
No SLS	48	27.8	173	0.3	N.S.
Had SLS	10	32.3	31		
Number of Credits First Term					
4 or Less					
No SLS	104	34.1	305	27.0	*
Had SLS	219	53.7	408		
5 - 8					
No SLS	73	48.3	151	21.3	*
Had SLS	167	71.7	233		
9 - 11					
No SLS	77	52.4	147	9.9	*
Had SLS	153	68.6	223		
12 or More					
No SLS	141	54.2	260	46.4	*
Had SLS	229	81.5	281		
Degree Sought					
Associate in Arts					
No SLS	270	49.8	542	51.3	*
Had SLS	596	68.9	865		
Associate in Science					
No SLS	125	38.9	321	30.3	*
Had SLS	172	61.4	280		
Citizenship Status					
Visa/Refugee					
No SLS	92	43.8	210	27.2	*
Had SLS	85	73.9	115		
U.S. Citizen/Resident Alien					
No SLS	303	46.4	653	65.3	*
Had SLS	683	66.3	1,030		

Table 4

Enrollment at Miami-Dade Community College
After One Year Based on Enrollment in SLS 1101
And Entering Level of Basic Skills
Fall 1985 First-Time-in-College Students

	Enrolled Next Fall		Number in Group	Chi Square	Significance p<.05
	Number	Percent			
Total					
No SLS	395	45.8	863	91.6	*
Had SLS	768	67.1	1,145		
Reading					
Below Cut					
No SLS	142	51.6	275	15.5	*
Had SLS	357	65.9	542		
Above Cut					
No SLS	119	48.8	244	26.3	*
Had SLS	321	68.4	469		
Writing					
Below Cut					
No SLS	121	47.3	256	20.0	*
Had SLS	329	64.1	513		
Above Cut					
No SLS	140	53.2	263	21.3	*
Had SLS	349	70.1	498		
Algebra/Math					
Below Cut					
No SLS	83	41.3	201	8.4	*
Had SLS	135	55.1	245		
Above Cut					
No SLS	178	56.0	318	22.4	*
Had SLS	543	70.9	766		
Number of Subtests Passed					
None					
No SLS	52	43.3	120	3.5	N.S.
Had SLS	89	54.6	163		(close)
One					
No SLS	65	54.6	119	6.7	*
Had SLS	203	68.1	298		
Two					
No SLS	60	44.8	134	19.8	*
Had SLS	148	68.8	215		
All					
No SLS	84	57.5	146	8.4	*
Had SLS	238	71.0	335		

Table 5

Grade Point Average Based on SLS Enrollment
And Demographic Characteristics
Fall 1985 First-Time-in-College Students

	Percentage With GPA of 2.0 or More		Number in Group
	First Semester	After 1 Year	
Total			
No SLS	55.9*	55.7*	863
Had SLS	67.5	60.0	1,145
Ethnicity			
Black Non-Hispanic			
No SLS	45.7*	45.3	223
Had SLS	65.7	52.9	391
White Non-Hispanic			
No SLS	62.5	63.1	168
Had SLS	67.0	63.4	227
Hispanic			
No SLS	57.5*	56.8*	421
Had SLS	69.4	64.5	513
Gender			
Male			
No SLS	49.2*	49.7*	429
Had SLS	63.9	58.0	526
Female			
No SLS	62.2*	61.8	434
Had SLS	70.6	61.7	619
Age			
18 or Less			
No SLS	63.4	68.1	191
Had SLS	68.9	63.9	515
19 - 22			
No SLS	51.5*	51.5	357
Had SLS	65.9	57.5	546
23 - 27			
No SLS	53.5	52.1	142
Had SLS	64.2	45.3	53
28 or Older			
No SLS	58.4*	53.8	173
Had SLS	77.4	64.5	31
Number of Credits First Term			
4 or Less			
No SLS	33.8*	39.0	305
Had SLS	59.6	41.[illegible]	408
5 - 8			
No SLS	60.3	57.0	151
Had SLS	64.0	58.3	233
9 - 11			
No SLS	63.3	60.5	147
Had SLS	69.5	66.8	223
12 or More			
No SLS	75.0	71.9*	260
Had SLS	80.4	82.2	281
Degree Sought			
Associate in Arts			
No SLS	57.4*	57.2*	542
Had SLS	68.1	62.4	865
Associate in Science			
No SLS	53.3*	53.3	321
Had SLS	65.7	52.5	280
Immigration Status			
Visa/Refugee			
No SLS	64.8	57.1	210
Had SLS	73.0	62.6	115
U.S. Citizen/Refugee Alien			
No SLS	53.0*	55.3	653
Had SLS	66.9	59.7	1,030

*Chi-square test was statistically significant with an alpha level of .05.

Table 6

Grade Point Average Based on SLS Enrollment
And Entering Level of Basic Skills
Fall 1985 First-Time-in-College Students

	Percentage With GPA of 2.0 or More		Number in Group
	First Semester	After 1 Year	
Total			
No SLS	55.9*	55.7*	863
Had SLS	67.5	60.0	1,145
Reading			
Below Cut			
No SLS	46.2*	49.1	275
Had SLS	67.9	52.2	542
Above Cut			
No SLS	56.2*	55.7*	273
Had SLS	64.6	63.8	440
Writing			
Below Cut			
No SLS	43.8*	46.5	256
Had SLS	66.1	51.7	513
Above Cut			
No SLS	57.8*	57.8	263
Had SLS	66.7	63.7	498
Algebra/Math			
Below Cut			
No SLS	38.3*	41.8	201
Had SLS	62.9	44.1	245
Above Cut			
No SLS	58.8*	58.8	318
Had SLS	67.5	61.9	766
Number of Subtests Passed			
None			
No SLS	33.3*	43.3	120
Had SLS	66.9	41.1	163
One			
No SLS	52.1*	50.4	119
Had SLS	65.1	54.4	298
Two			
No SLS	53.7*	46.3*	134
Had SLS	67.9	60.9	215
All			
No SLS	61.6	66.4	146
Had SLS	66.3	66.3	335

*Chi-square comparing SLS and Non-SLS enrollees was statistically significant using an alpha level of .05.

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SLS 1101 COLLEGE SURVIVAL
SYLLABUS 1 CREDIT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

College survival is a course designed to:

1) Make your entrance to College more comfortable and successful;

2) Meet your needs as a student entering a college setting for the first time;

3) increase your success in college by presenting strategies necessary for attainment of educational objectives.

THE COURSE IS ORGANIZED IN TERMS OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

A. Interpersonal Skills

Self evaluation
Communication skills

B. Learning Skills

Time Management
Note Taking
Test Taking
Money

C. Campus Resources

Athletic and Intramural Activities
Academic Advisement
Career Center
Counseling and Testing
Financial Aid
Library
Student Activities
Tutorial Services

D. College Mechanics

Registration Process
Course and Degree Requirements
G.P.A. Requirements
Understanding AGIS, SOAP, Academic Alert and CLAST

COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of the College Survival Course is to provide an opportunity for students to learn and adapt methods to be successful in school.

OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

Discuss how he/she is responsible for his/her experience in college.

Describe ways he/she can create a successful and satisfying experience at college.

List and describe specific methods to

1) manage time more efficiently
2) prepare for and take tests
3) take effective notes
4) listen for comprehension to a lecture
5) Present clear reports, both written and verbal.

Examine personal ideas and decisions regarding issues typically faced by college students such as personal relationships, drug abuse, health related practices, and budgeting money.

Describe and discuss several different procedures for planning, monitoring, and managing time.

Utilize a model of communication that facilitates liste ıg to and confronting friends, roommates, family members and instructors.

Discuss several procedures for focusing attention on the task at hand when reading, listening, typing and taking notes and tests.

Describe and demonstrate
the purpose and function of academic alert, "SOAP, "AGIS" "CLAST".

Locate and utilize various campus offices' and resources--
Library, Career Center, Financial Aid, Advisement, etc.

EVALUATION

Grades for the course will be based on the following:

Attendance	10 points
Assignments/Quizzes Journal Entrees	60 points
Learning Contract	30 points
TOTAL	100 points

TEACHING STRATEGIES

The objectives in this course will be achieved by: Lectures; small group discussions; individual, dyad and group exercises; guest lectures; film strips; telephone interviews; group sharing and assignments outside of class.

TEXT BOOKS - INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

The text book is titled, Becoming a Master Student by David B. Ellis, published by College Survival, Inc.

Instructional materials for this course include films, videotapes which are available in the library, resource people from the College and the community.

NOTE:

The outline of the course must be linked with the college callendar in order to deliver appropriate information in a timely fashion.

EXAMPLE: Academic Alert information should be delivered just prior to students receiving Academic Alert letters; AGIS information prior to registration, etc.

Instructor:_____

(Day) (Time) (Room)

OUTLINE OF COURSE

SLS 1101 College Survival

Week One	Introduction Chapter one (First Step)
Week Two	Due: Discovery Wheel and Journal Entry #5
Week Three	Chapter Two: Time Management
Week Four	Assignments: Exercise #4 (Time Monitor) P. 38 Journal Entry #12 Journal Entry #17
Week Five	Chapter Five: Notetaking Assignment: Journal Entry 35 and 36 Journal Entry 41
Week Six	Chapter Three: Memory
Week Seven	Assignment: (Make sure you read Power Process #3) Journal Entry 21, 22, 23 (Page 80-81) Outline of Learning Contract from either Chapters 4, 7, 9.
Week Eight	Chapter Six: Tests
Week Nine	Assignment: Journal Entry 44
Week Ten	Chapter Eight: Relationships
Week Eleven	Assignment: Exercise #36 Journal Entry 61 and 62
Week Twelve	Chapter Twelve: What Next Assignment: Exercise #56
Week Thirteen	Chapter Ten: Money Assignment: Journal Entry #76 and 78
Week Fourteen	Chapter 11 - Resources Career Center Other MDCC-N Resources and Systems AGIS, SOAP, ACADEMIC ALERT AND CLAST Learning Contract Due.
Week Fifteen	Campus Resources Continued
Week Sixteen	Review and final examination

Sequence Number

COURSE EVALUATION
SLS 1101
COLLEGE SURVIVAL

Appendix B
(1 of 2)
1985-1
Year/Term

This is an anonymous evaluation of your impression of the above named course. This information will be used to improve future classes. Your honest opinion is sincerely appreciated and will not have any bearing on you positively or negatively.

No. Students answering survey

1. The organization of the course was:

(571)	.8%	1:2%	2.8%	22.9%	25.6%	24.1%	22.8%
	1 poor	2	3	4 adequate	5	6	7 excellent

2. The objectives of the course were:

(598)	.8%	1.0%	3.1%	24.9%	16.7%	20.0%	33.7%
	1 vague	2	3	4 understandable	5	6	7 clearly evident

3. The ideas and activities presented were:

(615)	1.3%	1.6%	4.7%	21.7%	20.9%	21.1%	28.4%
	1 dull	2	3	4 appropriate	5	6	7 very interesting

4. The amount of work required for the course was:

(594)	.8%	1.5%	3.5%	61.9%	15.1%	10.4%	6.7%
	1 far too little	2	3	4 about right	5	6	7 very excessive

5. My motivational level for participation in this course was:

(604)	3.1%	3.8%	9.4%	34.6%	19.8%	18.3%	10.7%
	1 very low	2	3	4 average	5	6	7 very high

6. My involvement in this class was:

(611)	2.4%	4.4%	9.6%	31.5%	20.4%	17.8%	13.5%
	1 very skimpy	2	3	4 average	5	6	7 very thorough

My knowledge of the following campus resources is now:
For the next eight (8) questions use the scale typed below:

1 very low 2 3 low 4 adequate 5 6 high 7 very high

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
	2.8%	5.9%	13.0%	26.8%	18.6%	19.1%	13.5%
(559) 7. Athletic and Intramural Activities:	----	1.0%	3.2%	18.8%	19.7%	31.8%	25.2%
8. Academic Advisement.	.8%	2.2%	6.1%	19.6%	20.7%	27.5%	22.9%
9. Career Center	.8%	1.2%	8.4%	24.9%	23.6%	26.3%	14.6%
(584) 10. Counseling and Testing	3.0%	2.8%	7.0%	21.6%	11.9%	26.1%	27.3%
11. Financial Aid	.8%	1.1%	3.5%	14.4%	16.4%	26.6%	36.9%
(494) 12. Library	3.1%	4.9%	14.1%	22.7%	17.0%	19.6%	18.2%
13. Student Activities	8.3%	8.5%	15.0%	25.8%	16.2%	13.8%	12.0%
(509) 14. Tutorial Services (491)							

Page 2
Course Evaluation

My knowledge of the following college mechanics is now:

For the next eight (8) questions use the scale typed below:

1 very low 2 3 low 4 adequate 5 6 high 7 very high

Stu.Response to survey		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
		.8%	.8%	3.5%	15.9%	18.8%	30.7%	33.2%
(514)	15. Registration Process	.8%	.8%	3.6%	19.5%	20.5%	28.2%	26.5%
(516)	16. Course credits, programs (AA AS PC)	.8%	1.0%	3.2%	18.1%	20.8%	27.9%	28.5%
(561)	17. Course and Degree Requirements	----	3.2%	2.4%	20.6%	18.3%	29.4%	25.8%
(523)	18. Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements	2.1%	.8%	2.9%	12.9%	16.6%	25.0%	39.7%
(516)	19. AGIS	9.6%	5.5%	14.0%	20.1%	15.0%	18.0%	17.4%
(526)	20. SOAP	3.1%	4.4%	5.6%	23.3%	19.6%	21.3%	22.4%
(535)	21. Academic Alert	4.1%	4.5%	8.6%	26.4%	16.7%	18.6%	20.7%
(530)	22. CLAST							

23. I consider this course to have been:

3.0%	2.9%	5.8%	25.7%	18.5%	20.5%	23.3%
(583) 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
a complete waste			O.K.			highly beneficial

24. If I had to grade this course on quality and benefit as compared to my other course work it would be:

2.5%	4.3%	17.3%	22.8%	22.2%	20.4%	10.1%
(581) 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
way below			about the same			way above

My knowledge of the following learning skills is now:

For the next three (3) questions use the following scale:

1 very low 2 3 4 adequate 5 6 7 very high

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
	----	.8%	3.8%	28.8%	27.6%	23.5%	15.1%
(547) 25. Time management	.8%	1.8%	4.3%	24.7%	26.3%	22.8%	19.2%
(546) 26. Note taking	----	.8%	3.2%	23.8%	21.1%	29.8%	21.3%
(520) 27. Test Taking							

28. As a result of this course do you think you will be better able to survive at M-DCC?

.8%	1.3%	4.3%	18.2%	22.2%	23.8%	29.0%
(574) 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all			somewhat			very much so