

How Integrating Reading and Writing Supports Student Success

By Alison V. Kuehner and Jennifer Hurley

ABSTRACT: *The traditional remedial, stand-alone reading and writing courses at one community college were redesigned to create a single integrated reading and writing developmental course (IRW). Unlike a truly accelerated course, this IRW course combined two courses at the same level and therefore highlights the impact of integrating reading and writing. Data show that students in the IRW class were more successful than students in traditional remedial classes, both in developmental and in transfer English. The authors attribute student success to the challenging curriculum, extensive reading, intensive writing, and support for students' affective needs.*

If so many students were unable to get through remedial courses or succeed in transfer English, then clearly the system was failing students.

In one of the most comprehensive examinations of basic skills instruction in California community colleges, Norton Grubb and colleagues visited 20 colleges, observed instructors and students in 169 classrooms, and interviewed 323 faculty and administrators to understand the curriculum and pedagogy in precollege-level math and English courses (Grubb & Gabriner, 2012). What they found was a “pervasive use of remedial pedagogy” that was failing students (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013).

Remedial pedagogy, also known as “skill and drill” (or “drill and kill,” if you are not a fan), stresses part to whole instruction. In a writing classroom, this means students master writing sentences before crafting paragraphs; they must demonstrate paragraph competency before composing essays. Remedial pedagogy employs a decontextualized approach to learning. The emphasis is on getting the correct answer, on rules and procedures. So, for example, writing students might take grammar tests whereas reading students are expected to underline topic sentences in a reading.

To those teaching in California community colleges, Grubb and Gabriner’s observations were painfully familiar. We could see remedial pedagogy in the college’s reading and writing courses and in English learning labs. At the college where the authors teach, students in the remedial writing sequence who began two levels below transfer English (transfer English being the community college English course that fulfills the first semester composition requirement at state colleges and universities) enrolled in a course emphasizing sentence writing and paragraph development with a strong dose of

grammar along the way. One level below transfer, students moved from writing paragraphs to essays, again with more grammar instruction. Remedial reading courses focused on subskills, such as identifying main ideas versus supporting details, understanding organizational patterns, identifying facts versus opinions, making inferences, and drawing conclusions. Moreover, students in these remedial reading and writing courses have been required to complete one unit’s worth of work in the English Learning Center, consisting of skills-based programs such as reading passages and answering multiple choice questions (for reading students) or completing grammar exercises and tests (for writing students).

At Ohlone College more than 50% of students assessed were placed into developmental English, and evidence of the failure of remedial pedagogy was clear. Data showed students had little chance of getting through the remedial sequence and passing the transfer course: Only 45% of students who started two levels below passed transfer English within 6 years. For some instructors, this statistic validated the need for 2 semesters (at least!) of remedial courses. These students simply were not ready or able to take on college-level work. For others, this statistic was a wake-up call: If so many students were unable to get through remedial courses or succeed in transfer English, then clearly the system was failing students.

Theoretical Context: Responses to Remedial Pedagogy

Decades ago, Mike Rose (1983) critiqued the problems with remedial pedagogy, noting that remedial writing courses tended to be self-contained classes with simplistic, personal experience topics designed to reduce errors, when, in fact, students needed to “begin wrestling with academically oriented topics that [would] help them develop into more critical thinkers” (p. 2). More recently, Paulson and Armstrong (2010) asserted that remedial pedagogy that “positions literacy as merely and exclusively a set of decontextualized skills” is “theoretically unsupported and pedagogically ineffective” (p. 6); instead, “students must learn to negotiate the literacy practices of various discourse communities” (p. 6). In a review of over 245 publications examining community college developmental writing classes, Barhoum explained the prevalence of remedial

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pedagogy rested on untested, inaccurate assumptions about the limits of developmental students' abilities. Further, such an assumption "helps explain why the focus of many English and writing programs is primarily on grammar, sentences, and paragraphs, as opposed to the more effective, validated techniques shown in the research, such as challenging college-level assignments" (Barhoum, 2017, p. 805).

Rethinking remedial pedagogy, teacher-researchers, such as Rose (1983) and Bartholomae and Petrosky (1986), argued that students in developmental writing courses should engage in reading, writing, and thinking about academic texts and topics. Rose's antidote to a skills-based writing pedagogy is echoed in Dominic Voge's (2005) approach to reforming a skills-based reading pedagogy, in which "authentic learning tasks and texts" create a strategic approach to mastering academic literacy (p. 103). A constructivist or balanced approach to basic skills instruction is advocated by Grubb and Gabriner (2012) who argued that students "will be more engaged in well-structured educational environments with clear purposes, a challenging curriculum, high expectations, and a strong emphasis on achievement" (p. 14). Barhoum (2017) also found that "challenging, college-level work" (p. 800) is part of effective practices for developmental writing programs. What these remedial reforms have in common is an emphasis on contextualized instruction that challenges students in developmental courses by immersing them in academic literacy tasks.

Moreover, integrating reading and writing is seen as essential to reforming remedial English pedagogy (Goen-Salter, 2008). Goen-Salter claimed that problems with remedial English pedagogy stemmed from teaching reading and writing as separate subjects and hypothesized that "students would reap demonstrably greater benefits from an approach that integrates the two" (p. 85). Indeed, students in an integrated reading and writing course outperformed their peers who took the traditional and separate remedial reading and writing classes with higher retention and pass rates, higher scores on measures of reading comprehension and critical reasoning, and higher ratings on writing portfolios (Goen-Salter, 2008; Goen-Salter & Gillotte-Tropp, 2003).

Goen-Salter and her colleagues took care to develop a "truly integrated" reading and writing course (2003, p. 94), in which reading and writing processes inform and support each other. Rather than combine the skills-based approach of separate reading and writing classes, truly integrating reading and writing involved a rethinking and reform of the curriculum and rested on theory showing that reading and writing processes are intimately related (Tierney & Leys, 1984; Tierney & Pearson, 1983; Zamel, 1992). Indeed, research on recent national efforts to integrate reading and writing

classes suggests an "integrative approach." Such integration is characterized by "a lack of emphasis on discrete literacy skills in favor of more complex and contextualized literacy tasks aligned with the types of assignments students could expect to see in college-level courses" (Bickerstaff & Raufman, 2017, p. 14) and promises improved literacy learning. This integrative approach contrasts to an "additive" approach, in which the separate skills from traditional remedial reading and writing classes are taught in the same class (Bickerstaff & Raufman, 2017).

The efficacy of true integration is further described by Hayes and Williams (2016), who developed a research-based IRW (integrated reading and writing) class as a response to a multilevel skills-based developmental sequence. Students in the IRW class enrolled in and passed the transfer English course "at close to double the rate and in half the time of those students who follow[ed] the traditional development reading and writing course sequence" (Hayes & Williams, 2016, p. 19). In short, integrating

This integrative approach contrasts to an "additive" approach, in which the separate skills from traditional remedial reading and writing classes are taught in the same class.

reading and writing has proven more effective than separate reading and writing courses (Hayes & Williams, 2016; Hern, 2011), as has shortening the developmental sequence (Hodaras & Jaggars, 2014; Jaggars, Hodaras, Cho & Xu, 2015).

Redesign by Integrating Reading and Writing

Inspired by the success of developmental students in other California community colleges where developmental curriculum was redesigned and accelerated (Hayward & Willett, 2014), and motivated to teach a pedagogy aligned with their own constructivist beliefs about student learning (Cambourne, 2002), the authors integrated two stand-alone reading and writing courses one level below transfer English into a single IRW course. This IRW course would expedite students' learning since students could take one course, rather than two; students in the IRW course would enroll for five units, as compared to eight units (2 four-unit classes). Eligibility for the IRW course would be the same as for the stand-alone developmental reading and writing courses: either students successfully

completed the two-levels below transfer reading and writing courses, or students obtained a score between 74.5-90.5 on Accuplacer (the average of their scores on the sentence skills and the reading tests).

Instructor Training and Course Implementation

To prepare to teach the IRW course, the authors participated in the California Acceleration Project's (CAP) professional development training. CAP is a faculty-led movement designed to increase the success of developmental math and English students; CAP advocates "high challenge" curriculum that immerses students in the rigors of college reading and writing (Hern & Snell, 2013). "Junior Varsity English 1A" is the motto; in other words, students are expected to do the same kinds of reading and writing they would do in their transfer English classes. In fact, close alignment between the developmental course preceding the transfer-level class, dubbed as "backward design" (Hern & Snell, 2013), is supported by the best practices for an effective developmental education program in which "alignment between and among remedial and subsequent college-level courses is crucial to student... success" (Goldwasser, Martin, & Harris, 2017, p. 12).

The course would be piloted for 4 semesters, and data collected to assess the success of students both in the developmental class and in the subsequent transfer English course at the college. Moreover, the authors realized that unlike other community colleges that compressed two or more levels of developmental courses in order to accelerate students (Edgecombe, Jaggars, Xu, & Barragan, 2014), their IRW class would highlight the effects of integrating reading and writing at the same developmental level. This would allow for a comparison between the success and progress of students in separate skills-based reading and writing courses versus students in a single IRW class.

How IRW Differs from Traditional Developmental Classes

The IRW course was not only a structural redesign, but also included significant "pedagogical and curricular reforms" at the heart of other colleges' successful transformation of developmental courses (Edgecombe et al., 2014), namely an emphasis on academic rigor and engagement in college-level literacy tasks (Jaggars et al., 2015). The IRW course was built on an instructional cycle of continuous reading and writing activities, along with reflection on the reading and writing processes (Bunn, 2013; Hayes, Stahl, & Simpson, 1989). Examining the pedagogy and practice of IRW and considering students' comments on IRW suggests that teaching strategies and curriculum contribute significantly to student success. Based on CAP principles (Hern &

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Snell, 2013), the authors outline their own thinking as to why the IRW course works for students by focusing on key features of the class.

College-level material. One of CAP's core principles is "backward design," which means creating a developmental class that "look[s] and feel[s] like a good, standard college English course" (Hern & Snell, 2013, p. 7). Student success in developmental classes, such as CAP and the Community College of Baltimore County's ALP (Accelerated Learning Program) has been linked to a rigorous curriculum aligned with the college-level course that engages students in critical thinking (Jaggars et al., 2015).

The IRW course does this by focusing on argumentation and by incorporating readings into essay writing, both hallmarks of transfer English. For instance, in an IRW class, a typical opening assignment is to read various articles about motivation. Students discuss divergent theories, consider evidence that challenges those theories, then respond in an essay using the readings to support their position about what types of motivation work best and under what circumstances. Traditional developmental English classes also ask students to read and write, but the topics, readings, and discussion tend towards the personal, such as describing an important place or person. Moreover, students may not be asked to question the texts they read, to respond critically, or to use the readings in their writings.

IRW students report they enjoy engaging in and are motivated by the intellectual challenge of grappling with college-level material. As one student wrote in an end of the semester reflection,

I really did enjoy this [IRW] class more than the other English classes I had in the past. The other classes would be such a waste of time and would teach irrelevant topics/readings to us. I really felt like I was dumb in those classes, they were just horrible and boring. I felt that we were never going to really use any lessons . . . in real life scenarios. I highly prefer [IRW] English classes that involve critical thinking and reading because I feel they are more relatable. . . . It was challenging at some times but it was a good type of challenge.

Integration of reading and writing. In the traditional path, students take a reading class focused on reading skills, and a writing class focused on writing skills. This separation of reading and writing lends itself to teaching these literacy skills in isolation with an emphasis on a skills-based pedagogy (Rose, 1983). For instance, students in a remedial reading class might identify the thesis and topic sentences in an article, whereas students in a remedial writing class would craft a thesis and topic sentence for their papers. In contrast, IRW students also learn how to identify an author's thesis and main ideas, but do so

with an eye not only to understanding the reading passage but also understanding how writers signal important ideas to readers.

By integrating reading and writing, students are encouraged to use writing to enhance reading comprehension and to incorporate readings in their writing (Tierney & Leys, 1984; Zamel, 1992). For instance, IRW students might annotate a reading to aid comprehension, to develop a critical response, or to question the author's purpose. They may integrate those same annotations into their writing, for instance by briefly summarizing the reading before responding to it or by incorporating textual evidence to support an original thesis. Moreover, understanding the connections between reading and writing can motivate students to read to understand a topic and read to appreciate writing strategies (Bunn, 2013). Here is how one IRW student explained in an end-of-the-semester letter to herself how she developed her reading skills through writing and her writing skills through reading:

Understanding the connections between reading and writing can motivate students to read to understand a topic.

When you finished the article "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely," you divided it into three parts and summarized each part. It helped a lot for you to understand the ideas. At the same time, it also help [sic] you figure out the structure of this article, and you used what you learned in your own essay about social media: you began your essay with a story of your own life, just as the author began his article with the story of the actor.

Extensive reading and intensive writing.

Since developmental students may have less experience reading (Bartholmae & Petrosky, 1986), they need more reading time to catch up to their peers. Extensive reading in IRW is designed to give students strategies for tackling long texts, such as chunking and summarizing or assessing and pacing the time needed to complete a reading. The same goes for writing: Rather than writing short pieces, developmental students must learn how to compose long, sustained works (Bartholmae & Petrosky, 1986).

Although practice has been to assign readings in a developmental writing class, those readings tend to be short, personal experience essays about 2-3 pages in length. In contrast, the IRW course assigns

students lengthy works, beginning with articles of 5-6 pages, then quickly moving to chapters in books or to whole books. Length of assigned writings is also increased: In a traditional class, students may begin by writing a paragraph or a short essay (three paragraphs), whereas students in the IRW class are encouraged to write 2-3-page multiparagraph essays at the start of the class and to finish with 4-7-page essays, the typical page requirement for the transfer-level course.

Of course, quantity does not equate with quality, but it does tend to encourage students to develop and support their ideas. For instance, in order to write longer compositions, students must produce more ideas or more support for their ideas. IRW students are also taught how to engage in a counterargument: how to summarize and respond to (by either conceding or refuting) strong arguments against their own position.

Most importantly, readings for the class are selected to have both academic appeal (research-based) as well as personal appeal (students could relate topics to their lives). This combination of intellectual engagement and personal relevance helps many students not only survive the readings but thrive. As one IRW student explained,

[IRW] is going to have students read a lot of articles. . . . the readings in IRW are very interesting. A lot of articles and books that I've read throughout high school were completely boring to the point where I had no motivation to put in any effort in actually understanding what I was reading. I can honestly say that the articles that I've read in this class really grabbed my attention and because they grabbed my attention, they were very understandable.

Low-stakes, collaborative practice. Novices in any endeavor need support, encouragement, and guidance. They must understand what is expected of them, how to achieve those expectations, and how to persist through the predictable mistakes and setbacks that accompany learning. One of CAP's principles "low-stakes, collaborative practice" (Hern & Snell, 2013) emphasizes that students be allowed to try new reading, writing, and thinking tasks without excessive judgment. This approach not only gives students confidence but also builds real skills. As one student explained,

I really enjoyed the whole [IRW] class, but what I really enjoyed was some of the class activities we did. Vocab games, working in groups to come up with good quotes and sentences was really fun for me and it really helped me out in my writing and how I word things.

IRW students participate in reading and writing activities that are fun, nonpunitive, and productive. An example of a low-stakes collaborative reading activity might be to allow students to chose

a particularly challenging passage in the assigned reading, then meet in groups to review their passages and work toward understanding. An example of low-stakes collaborative writing activity (that might follow on the heels of the previously described reading activity) could be a “team effort” summary of the reading. Individual students compose summaries of the reading, then engage in peer review, and finally revise their summaries until they are satisfied with the results. In the IRW class, students are given an opportunity to process what they read and to reflect on what they write through small-group discussion and supportive activities, a step that is often skipped in many English classes, both developmental and transfer.

Intentional support for affective needs. CAP pedagogy’s fifth instructional design principle is the “intentional support for affective needs” (Hern & Snell, 2013). Students placed in developmental classes may struggle with confidence and motivation, sometimes due to years of bad experiences in school. Feelings of discouragement, fear, and lack of confidence can lead to self-sabotaging behaviors such as the failure to turn in assigned work or show up for class. For example, *The College Fear Factor* by Rebecca Cox (2009) provides evidence that many community college students would rather not turn in work than confront what their teachers might say about their work. As Cox puts it, “every assessment-related activity posed the risk of exposing to others (both professors and peers) what students already suspected: their overall unfitness for college” (p. 36).

Affective support includes student-teacher conferences, emailing absent students, teaching students strategies for maintaining focus while reading, encouraging discussion around barriers to success, and building a strong classroom community. This is in sharp contrast to the stand-alone remedial classes, which assume that students are deficient and often penalize them for mistakes and for poor performance on tests.

Individualized instruction. Students in the traditional developmental reading and writing courses are required to complete one unit in the college’s English Learning Center, consisting of a series of reading and/or writing activities that all students must complete, regardless of their abilities or mastery of the material. In developmental writing classes, students complete exercises on various grammar elements, such as commas, colons, or semicolons, then are tested on the material. In developmental reading classes, students practice the PQ3R study method (Preview, Question, Read, Recite, Review) on selected textbook chapters. Although developmental students certainly need work on grammar skills and reading strategies, this lab work is not integrated into the classroom assignments; is often skills-based and repetitive; and is perceived as separate, busy work by many students.

In contrast, the IRW instructor can work individually with students during or after class, to handle grammar or other writing issues. Moreover, rather than teach students skills before they read or write, instructors can teach skills students need as they read and write. For instance, as students are composing thesis statements and struggling to fit their ideas into a single sentence, the instructor can model and discuss various options, such as using parallel structure to create a coherent sentence, crafting a more general thesis to be fleshed out later in the paper, or even breaking the thesis into multiple sentences.

One IRW student explained how she appreciated that the instructor commented on and returned students’ weekly written responses to the readings, allowing time in class to revise:

I found it very helpful when [the instructor] printed our responses and we all found ways we can make it stronger. It helped me realize where I made mistakes and I learned how to correct

One IRW student... appreciated that the instructor commented on and returned students’ weekly written responses.

them. I enjoyed a lot when we had mini-lessons on little things such as FANBOYS, colon use, comma use because it helped me refresh my memory of the things that I have forgotten.

Like a good coach who lets players play their game then assesses the results in the locker room, a good IRW teacher lets students read and write, then assesses and teaches the skills students most need before they complete their next reading or writing assignment. The differences between the traditional and IRW curriculum is illustrated with example reading and writing assignments in Appendix A.

Method

Despite the success of acceleration and integration at other California community colleges (Edgecombe et al., 2014), there is “generally little research on the impact IRW has on student achievement” (Saxon, Martirosyan, & Vick, 2016). The authors’ experiment with integrating reading and writing at one level below transfer English plays an important role in assessing reading-writing integration as distinct from acceleration. In other words, because the IRW class combined reading and writing courses at the same level, it did not accelerate students in the same way as compressing two levels (a lower and an upper

level) of developmental English classes into one developmental class.

Setting and Participants

The authors were teaching at a one-district, two-campus community college in a suburban area with a diverse student population around 16,000. The student body was composed of approximately 31% Asian, 24% Hispanic/Latino, 20% White, 10% Filipino/Pacific-Islander, and 4% African-American students, as well as 5% identifying as multiracial and 6% as other.

Data Collection and Analysis

The college’s Intuition Research Analyst collected data on cohorts of students for the first 4 semesters the course was offered: Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015, and Fall 2015 (IRW was not offered during the summer). We looked at success rates in the developmental courses, subsequent enrollment in transfer English at our college, and success in transfer English at our college within 1 year after completing the developmental course. One year was chosen because, if students in the IRW class were more successful than those taking the traditional developmental courses, the college could add more IRW sections. Success was measured by students’ grades: If students earned a C or better in the developmental course, they could continue in the English sequence; if students earned a C or better in transfer English, they would fulfill their English requirement to graduate with an AA degree. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between the type of developmental English classes taken and enrollment in transfer English classes.

Success for developmental students is not only predicated on passing the developmental course but, more importantly, on passing transfer English. As Goudas and Boylan (2012) assert, “to take students who do not understand basic math and English concepts and to get them to pass their gatekeeper course at the same rates as students who never require remediation should be considered a success for developmental education” (p. 4). The authors accept this definition of success; we therefore not only looked at success rates in developmental classes but also compared students who began in developmental classes to students placed directly into transfer English.

Results

IRW vs. Traditional Developmental Class

Data from the first 4 semesters of IRW show that students who began in the IRW course completed transfer English within 1 year at a significantly

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higher rate as compared to those who began in the traditional developmental reading and writing courses (see Table 1). The chi-square test showed the relation between these variables was significant ($X^2(1) = 75.501, p < .05$). In fact, students were 1.6 times more likely to complete transfer English within a year of completing the developmental course if they took the IRW class.

that students of color, particularly Hispanic/Latino students, were more successful in integrated reading and writing classes than in traditional developmental courses (see Table 2). That these students fared better in IRW is especially important given that Hispanic/Latino students at the college have been placed at disproportionately high numbers into developmental English courses and that, in general, these students have not succeeded at the same rates as Asian or white students in traditional developmental classes.

Table 1.

Comparison of Success Rates for Students: IRW vs. Traditional Developmental Class (Spring 2014 – Fall 2015)

Course	Total Students	Success in Developmental English	Enrollment in Transfer English	Success in Transfer English
IRW	433	335 (77%)	306 (70%)	281 (65%)
Traditional Developmental	1886	1294 (68%)	874 (46%)	781 (41%)

Additionally, students who took the IRW classes had higher grade-point averages ($M = 2.33, SD = 1.21$) than did those who took the traditional developmental classes ($M = 2.09, SD = 1.44, t(744) = 3.56, p = 0.000$). Most surprising, the enrollment rates of the successful IRW students in transfer English was much higher than for students who successfully completed the traditional developmental writing class. Data are not available to explain this lack of progress for students who took the traditional developmental classes; however, the authors speculate these students may have needed to take or retake a reading course, thus holding them back from subsequently enrolling in transfer English.

Student Ethnicity and Equity

Examination of success rates for students placed into developmental courses by ethnicity shows

In contrast, Hispanic/Latino students starting in IRW classes outperformed other ethnic groups in successful completion of transfer English; moreover, Hispanic/Latino students who took IRW succeeded in transfer English at twice the rate of their peers who began in the traditional developmental course.

IRW students were more successful in transfer English than their peers who took the traditional developmental writing class (see Table 3 on page 25). A *t*-test was run on students meeting the prerequisite for the transfer English class and, although the result was not significant (we cannot say that IRW as compared to traditional developmental had a positive effect on success in transfer English), data demonstrated that IRW prepared students as well as traditional developmental writing for transfer English. The IRW course took only 1 semester to prepare students to advance to transfer English,

whereas the traditional developmental path could take 1 or 2 semesters, a major difference.

Finally, IRW graduates who continued to enroll in transfer English had higher grade point averages ($M = 2.80, SD = 1.03$) than did the students placed directly into transfer English classes ($M = 2.47, SD = 1.50, t(520) = 4.90, p = 0.000$). These data provided evidence that IRW closed the equity gap between students deemed “unprepared” and those deemed “prepared” in transfer English. Therefore, the model meets Goudas and Boylan’s (2012) definition of success for developmental education.

Limitations

Students with the same score range on the Accuplacer test were free to enroll in either the IRW course or the traditional developmental writing course, and therefore students self-placed. It could be that more motivated students—students who realized they could complete their developmental English requirement by taking five units rather than eight units—enrolled in the IRW course. Moreover, the college has limited resources to assess student variability. We do not know, for instance, what the native language of students in the IRW course was compared to those in the traditional courses. We could, however, determine the ethnic makeup of students in the traditional and IRW courses: for the three largest ethnic groups on campus, students in IRW were almost identical to students in the traditional developmental course (see Table 4 on page 25). Given the small number of African-American students, they are not included in these statistics.

Implications for Practice: Integrating Reading and Writing Works

Given that our college’s IRW course has been developed based on CAP tenets and that CAP courses have proven to be successful for a variety of community college students at many California community colleges (Hayward & Willett, 2014), it is not surprising that the redesigned curriculum can claim partial credit for student success. In fact, when the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges looked at student success rates for the initial 16 college cohort to implement CAP pedagogy, they found that students were 2.3 times more likely to succeed in the transfer-level English if they took a “high-acceleration” class (that is, a course that is one or two levels below and aligns closely with the transfer level course) as opposed to a traditional developmental class (Hayward & Willett, 2014, p. 2). Moreover, our results align with the success of students in other IRW courses (Goen-Salter & Gillotte-Tropp, 2003) and in other community colleges outside California (Hayward & Willett, 2014).

Table 2.

Comparison of Success Rates for Students by Ethnicity: IRW vs. Traditional Developmental Class (Spring 2014 – Fall 2015)

Ethnicity	Course	Enrollment in Dev.	Success in Dev.	Enrollment in Transfer	Success in Transfer
Asian	IRW	153	108	101	98 (64%)
Asian	Trad. Dev.	661	502	369	345 (52%)
Hispanic/Latino	IRW	133	108	99	90 (68%)
Hispanic/Latino	Trad. Dev.	558	344	215	188 (34%)
White	IRW	53	42	36	31 (58%)
White	Trad. Dev.	237	161	103	86 (36%)

Table 3.**Success and Retention Rates in Transfer English for Students Meeting Prerequisites Compared to Students Placed into Transfer English (Fall 2014 – Fall 2015)**

	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015
Total Number of Students Enrolled in Transfer English	1003	850	1038
Students with traditional developmental prereq.			
Enrolled in Transfer English	337	375	318
Retained in Transfer English	82.5%	80.3%	79.2%
Succeeded in Transfer English	70.3%	67.7%	64.8%
Students with IRW prerequisite			
Enrolled in Transfer English	58	102	53
Retained in Transfer English	87.9%	88.2%	79.2%
Succeeded in Transfer English	77.6%	84.3%	77.4%
Students placed into Transfer English			
Enrolled in Transfer English	536	294	539
Retained in Transfer English	85.1%	75.2%	77.0%
Succeeded in Transfer English	72.9%	57.1%	65.1%

Many examples of successful IRW classes exist, as well as less successful strategies, such as the “additive” approach, which attempts to teach reading and writing as discrete skills in the same course (Bickerstaff & Raufman, 2017). Faculty should carefully examine their current developmental pedagogy and curriculum to align their teaching practices with proven approaches that truly integrate

Table 4.**Comparison of Students by Ethnicity: IRW vs. Traditional Developmental Class (Spring 2014 – Fall 2015)**

Ethnicity	Course	Percent Total Developmental
Asian	IRW	35%
	Trad. Dev.	35%
Hispanic/Latino	IRW	31%
	Trad. Dev.	30%
White	IRW	12%
	Trad. Dev.	13%

reading and writing. This study has revealed the importance of professional development to such curriculum change.

Instructors seeking to improve their developmental curriculum can make use of resources on the CAP website (accelerationproject.org) including descriptions of CAP principles, examples of classroom practices, and thematic units for IRW classes. The Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) at City College of Baltimore (alp-deved.org) also provides valuable resources for developing an IRW course, including sample syllabi, reading and writing assignments, classroom materials and lesson plans. Instructors can review well designed courses, such as Hayes and Williams’ (2016) research-based integrated, accelerated IRW course. They can learn how to construct thoughtful writing activities that inform reading and reading activities that inform writing from studying other college instructors’ practices, such as Zamel’s (1992) use of journals or Goen-Salter’s (2008) use of self-reflective activities. Although aimed at high school teachers, Nicholas’ (2017) detailed description of low-stakes and

high-stakes reading and writing tasks in an IRW English class could be modified for college students.

Conclusions

Our data show and participating students tell us that employing effective developmental curriculum and pedagogy is critical to student success. With compelling evidence that developmental students are capable of college-level work, faculty should not settle for low success rates for developmental students. With developmental educational reform sweeping the nation, now is the time to implement meaningful change—to revise remedial pedagogy into integrated reading-writing courses that engage students with relevant, meaningful, academically challenging curriculum.

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Appendix

Comparison of Traditional Developmental and Integrated Reading Writing Course Curricula

	Traditional Developmental Reading Course	Traditional Developmental Writing Course	IRW Course
Course Organization	Skills-based organization. <i>Example: Main idea vs. supporting details</i>	Rhetorical modes organization. <i>Example: Illustration paper</i>	Thematically organized around questions. <i>Example: Do social media isolate or connect us?</i>
Assigned Readings	Short articles and essays. <i>Example: "Me and My Shadow" a 3-page personal experience essay about the relationship between a blind person and her dog</i>	Short articles and essays. <i>Example: A 3-page survey of college freshmen that includes students' responses to questions about why they are attending college</i>	Articles, book chapters, and a book. <i>Example: "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?" a 19-page Atlantic Monthly article incorporating research, interviews, and anecdotes</i>
Assigned Writings	Short answers to comprehension or inference questions and summary writing. <i>Example: Determine the topic and main idea of the article--Pick a sentence from the article that expresses the main idea AND write the main idea in your own words.</i>	Paragraphs and essays such as illustration, summary, or compare-contrast that refer to or model the readings. <i>Example: Three reasons for attending college most frequently cited are to get a better job, to learn more about things, and to make more money. Do you and people you know share these reasons for going to college?</i>	Essays, including critical response, synthesis, and argument papers that incorporate information from the readings. <i>Example: Is Facebook—or other social media—making us lonely, as Stephen Marche suggests in his article? Draw from the articles we have read and from your own experiences with Facebook to support your position.</i>
Other Work	Reading comprehension programs and activities. <i>Example: Students study the PQR3 (Preview, Question, Read, Recite and Review) and apply to textbook chapters supplied by the lab</i>	Grammar exercises assigned as lab work and short writing exercises. <i>Example: Students study a module on commas and take a test.</i>	Debates, presentations, and reading quizzes. <i>Example: Student groups present key concepts from one of the assigned readings on social media to the class</i>

