

# THE BSI NEWSLETTER

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Editor: **Ellen Oppenberg**, Coordinator, Foundational Skills  
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## Highlights in This Edition

- ✓ Foundational Skills Committee Decisions
- ✓ Passing Rates in Foundational Skills Classes
- ✓ Pilot Program in English Being Launched
- ✓ Advisory Action Group Needs Volunteers
- ✓ Reimbursement for Meetings/Conferences
- ✓ FIGs and FINs
- ✓ CALWORKS
- ✓ Conferences Coming Up

WELCOME TO THE SPRING SEMESTER. THIS IS THE SECOND EDITION OF THE BSI NEWSLETTER. WITH THE GOAL BEING COMMUNICATION, EACH EDITION WILL CONTINUE TO BE FILLED WITH INFORMATION THAT WILL BE HELPFUL TO YOU. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE, PLEASE SEND YOUR ARTICLE TO ELLEN OPPENBERG AT [elleno@glendale.edu](mailto:elleno@glendale.edu).

## Foundational Skills Committee

**This governance committee was formed in April of 2008. The mission of this committee is to** promote student learning in foundational skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language, as well as learning skills which are necessary for students to succeed in college-level work. The committee will work to promote an integrated and coherent approach to offer foundational skills to maximize the benefit to students.

Meetings take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month during the semester.

Recent Decisions Made By the Committee:

- 1) Conference/meeting reimbursement (see article that follows)
- 2) Construct a Foundational Skills website
- 3) Make presentations to faculty re: the Foundational Skills Committee Action Plan for 2009-2011
- 4) Monitor progress of proposals currently being funded

## To Do Nothing Is Not An Option

Thank you to President Obama for this insightful comment as he has addressed the country and particularly his fellow politicians. This is exactly the mindset needed to improve the passing rates of students in the Foundational Skills classes. Data gathered last semester show that, with some exceptions, passing of English and Math hovered between 43% and 48%. Retention rates, however, were outstanding at an average of 85%. Credit ESL continues to show steady and impressive passing and retention rates.

How do we accomplish better passing rates? It is proven by voluminous research that building connections is very important for students in Foundational Skills classes. Connections to the campus, connections to staff and a feeling that all on campus are helping this individual to succeed. The latter can only come from the power of this

**thought: No matter which class a student is taking on campus- that student belongs to the entire campus. We are all responsible to that student and the rest of the 70% that are enrolling in community college and placing in one or more foundational skill level classes.**

Pilot Program Being Launched This Semester

Target Group: Students in Eng. 186 - 191

Interventions:        Student Contracts  
                              Learning Styles Inventory  
                              Connections Student Directory  
                              Classroom Volunteer Aides  
                              Learning Center Workshops  
                              Goal Orientation  
                              Reading Assessment

Aim:                      To see if passing rates increase due to systematic monitoring of student progress and the bridging of academic and student services.



### **Advisory Action Group**

Looking for interested faculty and staff of Foundational Skills classes (Math, English, ESL), CTE, College Services (counseling, career center, DSPS, learning center) and Non Credit to meet each month to collaborate, share ideas, that will improve what we offer for the Foundational Skills student on our campus.

First meeting to be held in March. Flex Credit to be offered.  
Contact Ellen Oppenberg of your interest.

### **Reimbursement For Meeting/Conference Attendance**

The Foundational Skills Committee has generously decided to make funds available to faculty who attend a conference or meeting that will directly benefit the Foundational Skills student. Funds are limited. The faculty member's request must meet certain criteria and go through an approval process. A form is available from Ellen Oppenberg or Dana Nartea. After receiving the completed form and attachments, an approval process will ensue. If approved, the amount of reimbursement will be determined.

### **FIGs & FINs**

The college was awarded the Hewlett Packard grant at the end of last semester. This is due in great part to the efforts of Mark Maier and Sarah McLemore. The money is to be used for Faculty Inquiry Networks (FIN). This presents a golden opportunity to start communicating across disciplines and coming together to inspire more innovative teaching methods, etc. Joining Mark and Sarah in the first FIN are Lara Kartalian, Paul Vera, Jennifer Krestow, Cameron Hastings and Chris Juzwiak.

Additionally, Mark and Sarah originated Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIG) on this campus last year. Please keep attentive to your email as many outstanding opportunities and information will be sent from these extremely hardworking faculty members.

## **CALWORKS**

It may surprise you that over 1,000 students on the main campus and Garfield campus receive support from CALWORKS and Gain programs. Among the support they receive is child care and financial assistance. In return, a student must complete their education and/or job training within 5 years. Other requirements exist but best be told to you by the receptive and approachable staff headed by Aarin Edwards. They await your inquiries in SF 114.

### **Conferences You Don't Want To Miss**

February 25 (Webinar) 11 AM Free

#### **Unlocking the Possibilities of Content Area Readings in a College Success Course**

Kathy Hartman, Kutztown University

Join the author of *Investing in Your College Education* and *35 Ways to Discover a Major* to learn how content area readings can help students 1) learn and improve college success strategies, 2) understand their learning styles and the role of general education courses in their lives, and 3) explore majors and careers. [▶Register now.](#)

March 5 (Webinar) 10 AM Free

#### **Raising the Bar: Lower Expectations and Higher Learning**

Constance Staley, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs

The "Oh, well . . . Syndrome" may be gaining on us. Many of today's first-year students enter college expecting to work hard and do well, but soon thereafter, mediocrity sets in. Research shows that many new students accept disengagement and reduced academic investment. Only 24 percent of 2008 full-time community college students reported always coming to class fully prepared. How can those of us who value higher learning help students with lower expectations raise the bar? This eSeminar will explore these complex issues and generate potential teaching strategies to counteract them. [▶Register now.](#)

March 10 (Webinar) 9:30 AM Free

#### **So, What Do Learning Styles Have to Do with Actual Learning?**

Carolyn Hopper, Middle Tennessee State University

In order to improve learning, it is important that we help students move from being simply receivers of knowledge to becoming producers of knowledge. To ensure optimal learning, students should use their preferred learning styles for receiving and processing new information, and for responding to that information. This presentation highlights three approaches to learning styles: sensory modes, hemispheric dominance, and multiple intelligences. With an understanding of each approach, students can take steps to improve learning. [▶Register now.](#)

**If 5 or more faculty or staff contact Ellen Oppenberg with an interest in being a part of a webinar, she will assist in securing a room on campus that has a computer, screen and phone hook-up.**

March 11-12 (Conference at the Universal - Sheraton) Free

**Contextualized Teaching and Learning: CTE/Basic Skills workshops. Methodologies and misconceptions will be the focus.**

**Geared for CTE and Basic Skills Faculty. Hurry to register for this conference as space is limited. Website: [www.cccbbsi.org/regional-meetings](http://www.cccbbsi.org/regional-meetings)**

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*"Attitudes are contagious. Are yours worth catching?"*  
~Dennis and Wendy Mannering