

**The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching**  
Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education in Community Colleges

**Chabot College Proposal**

**A. Campus Demographic Description**

Chabot College is a comprehensive, urban community college located in Hayward, California. The college serves more than 15,000 students each term with approximately 4,000 full-time and 11,000 part-time students (Chabot College Fall 2003 Census). As these numbers indicate, the majority of Chabot students (72%) attend part time primarily for economic reasons. According to a 2003 survey, 63% of our students report household income levels of low or low to medium based on federal poverty rate guidelines, and over 60% of Chabot students work 20-40 hours per week (Chabot College Student Survey, Fall 2003). Moreover, approximately 40% of Chabot students are eligible and 25% apply for financial aid each semester. All such indicators suggest that students attending Chabot struggle financially.

Chabot College enrolls a student body that mirrors the ethnic diversity of the East Bay. The student population is 13% African American, 18% Asian American, 10% Filipino, 22% Latino, and 28% White, with the remaining population either unknown or comprised of other heritage groups. Women compose 57% of the student body and men 41%. There is even age distribution among students: 51% are youth ages 24 or younger, and 49% are adult students ages 25 or older (Chabot College Fall 2003 Census). Clearly, the college serves students from a variety of backgrounds; in fact, it is the remarkable diversity of our student body that best characterizes Chabot as an institution. Consequently, the issues we face are more complex in nature than if a single racial, ethnic, or age group were the majority.

Chabot is also challenged by a significant number of students entering the college under-prepared for college level work. Of new students, 77% require remediation in basic math and 78% require remediation in basic English (Assessment Outcomes, Fall 2003). Students enrolled in developmental courses are ethnically similar to the student body at large, with the exception of Latino students who comprise a noticeably higher percentage of developmental enrollments (30%) compared to the college average (22%). Chabot's basic skills population is predominantly young and female: 69% are youth ages 24 or younger and 61% are female. As discussed in the narrative that follows, many developmental students fail to succeed and persist at Chabot. To remedy this situation, the college has engaged in a number of basic skills and institution-wide reform efforts, which form the basis for this proposal.

**B. Current Program Description**

Chabot offers a two-semester basic skills English sequence, English 101A and 101B, which provides instruction in preparatory reading, writing, and critical thinking. Students can also opt to take English 102, an accelerated, one-semester version of English 101A/B. The developmental math sequence is comprised of three courses: Math 105 Basic Mathematics; Math 65 Elementary Algebra; and Math 55 Intermediate Algebra. In any given semester, the college enrolls approximately 4,500 students or 30% of the Chabot population in developmental English and mathematics courses.

The college gathers and analyzes student outcome data across our basic skills curriculum. As the following highlights suggest, a significant number of Chabot students have difficulty progressing through the developmental curriculum:

- Each semester approximately 50% of developmental students either fail or withdraw from English and math basic skills courses.
- On average, only 24% of students enrolled in basic English (English 101A) persist and succeed in college level English within two years.
- Only 20% of students enrolled in basic math (Math 105) persist and succeed in the subsequent math course (Math 65) within two years.
- A mere 8% of the students who begin in basic math (Math 105) successfully complete a transferable math course within three years.
- In particular, students of color achieve below-average outcomes. African-American and Latino students have lower success rates in basic English (English 102) compared to all other race-ethnicities. Similarly, African-American students have lower persistence from Intermediate Algebra (Math 55) to college level math than the college average.

Early non-success in developmental coursework hinders progression through the academic pipeline. To improve student outcomes, Chabot has undertaken a number of reform initiatives in basic skills as summarized below.

### **Puente and Dajara Learning Communities**

In 1981, Chabot instructors Felix Galaviz and Patricia McGrath founded the Puente Project, an innovative learning community designed to increase the number of Mexican American and Latino students transferring to four-year colleges and universities. Puente is a year-long writing, counseling, and mentoring program that links counseling with instruction in developmental English. Since its inception, Puente has expanded to 56 community colleges and 36 high schools across the state and is widely regarded as a national model for promoting student achievement. As an outgrowth of Puente's success, Chabot College has developed several specialized cohorts, most notably the Daraja Project, a learning community targeting African American students. Like Puente, the Daraja Project links counseling with developmental English courses.

College retention research has demonstrated that students who feel connected to the college – whether that connection is academic, personal, social, or co-curricular – are more likely to stay in school than those who don't (Tinto 1997, 1998). The Puente and Dajara learning communities provide that sense of connection through paired courses, mentoring, peer-to-peer support, and interdisciplinary course content that reflects students' backgrounds. Chabot's experience with Puente and Daraja confirms that the learning community model promotes positive student outcomes. Averaging data from 1994 through 2001, 87% of Puente students and 75% of Daraja students persisted in their studies as compared to only 64% of Chabot students as a whole. Even more dramatically, twice the percentage of African American students who enrolled in Daraja's English 102 section went on to succeed in college level English than African Americans who enrolled in stand-alone English 102 sections. Chabot's Puente program has achieved similar results.

### **Springboard to Transfer Learning Community**

In addition to Puente and Daraja, the college has experimented with several learning communities including PACE (Program for Adult College Education), ISLS (Interdisciplinary Studies in Letters and Science) and most recently the IEMS (Integrated English, Mathematics, and Science) Program, an NSF funded project. All of these initiatives show promise for improving student outcomes. However, participation in learning communities at Chabot is limited, serving 1,000 students or 6% of our student population each year. Learning communities can also be cost and labor intensive endeavors. Chabot is challenged to extend the benefits of cohort learning to a greater number of students in ways that are cost-effective for the institution.

To address this challenge, Chabot allocated funds to a faculty team to research and design a new low-cost learning community that can be replicated across the campus environment. The result is “Springboard to Transfer.” This new learning community is designed for developmental students who want to complete their G.E. requirements and transfer to a four-year institution within three years. Each semester, Springboard students will enroll in one English class and one general education course from another discipline. These paired courses will share a core full-length text, providing opportunity for cross-disciplinary thinking and collaboration. Springboard to Transfer relies on existing systems for recruitment, orientation, and counseling and draws from existing Chabot curriculum in order to minimize the expense often associated with learning communities.

The college will launch the first cohort of Springboard to Transfer in Fall 2005. Faculty working on Springboard have spent two semesters carefully researching this project through an extensive review of the scholarly and practitioner literature, visits to model programs, and attendance at the National Learning Community Conference sponsored by Evergreen State College. Overwhelmingly, the research indicates that learning communities strengthen student retention and academic achievement (Minkler 2002; Taylor, et al 2003). These findings are consistent with Chabot’s own experience with cohort learning and lead us to conclude that an expansion of learning communities at Chabot will enhance the educational environment.

### **Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum (WRAC) Center**

The campus WRAC Center provides assistance with basic reading and writing through drop-in tutoring; computer-assisted instruction; and tutorial classes to supplement college courses. The rationale for the WRAC Center is based on a “holistic” approach to teaching basic skills that accommodates different learning styles and represents curriculum from all instructional divisions. The Center is faculty driven and soundly linked to classroom instruction. The WRAC Center is an extremely successful innovation. Data shows that 82% of new basic skills students who use the WRAC center persist in their studies as compared to 68% of new basic skills students on average.

### **Supplemental Instruction for Basic Math**

Chabot’s Institutional Planning and Budget Council allocated funds last year to the math division to design and implement a supplemental instruction (SI) program for developmental math. Four sections are currently implementing the SI model this fall. Well-trained student assistants support classroom learning through tutoring, assisting in class, managing study groups, and providing students with regular feedback on homework assignments. The rationale for this project is based on the research literature, which identifies supplemental instruction, tutoring, and a high degree of structure as features most commonly associated with successful courses (Boylan and Saxon, National Center for Developmental Education). SI

models such as the University of Missouri-Kansas City have also demonstrated higher course grades and higher student retention rates as a result of supplemental instruction. Already, Chabot faculty are seeing positive outcomes in their classrooms. Students in the SI sections appear more engaged in their learning and attend more frequently than students in other basic math classes. Faculty attribute this improvement to the increased level of interaction and daily feedback on homework that the SI assistants provide.

### **Faculty and Staff Development**

The college has an active staff development committee that supports learning for faculty and staff. Consistent with the scholarly literature on powerful teaching and learning, an important dimension of this work is supporting faculty to shift from a teacher-centered paradigm emphasizing what we are teaching to a learner-center paradigm focused on what students are actually learning.

For the past two years, a faculty learning community has focused intensely on Classroom Assessment using the seminal text by Thomas Angelo and Patricia Cross. Recent staff development activities also include an ongoing “Talking about Teaching” series that invites faculty from across the curriculum to reflect upon their teaching practices. This series has fostered the widespread use of Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs), Learning Style Inventories, and reading strategies across the curriculum. In addition, Staff Development regularly brings outside speakers to Chabot to stimulate reflection on teaching and learning. Most recently, Staff Development sponsored a three-day workshop with noted author and educator, Dr. Rita Smilkstein. The workshops explored how new research on the brain and learning can impact what we do in the classroom. All these activities have inspired inquiry and discussion around student learning across the college environment.

### **C. Proposed Plan of Action**

The college intends to utilize the support of the Carnegie Foundation to expand Chabot’s innovations around basic skills learning communities, supplemental instruction, and faculty development. Our goal is to improve student outcomes and enhance student learning and engagement in developmental mathematics and English courses. Specifically, the college will use Carnegie funds and technical assistance to:

1. Support the launch of “Springboard to Transfer” in Fall 2005 and expansion in subsequent years;
2. Engage Springboard and Developmental Math faculty in professional development activities focused on cross-disciplinary connections and learner-centered pedagogy;
3. Create curricular links between Developmental Math and Springboard to Transfer; and
4. Expand the use of Supplemental Instruction in basic math courses.

The above activities are closely aligned with the principles and strategies of the Carnegie Foundation. Most particularly, our work emphasizes clear learning goals for students; curricular and social connections that engage students in the life of the college; regular feedback on student assignments; and a culture of assessment around student learning.

A summary of planned activities for three years and a workplan for year one follows.

### **Springboard to Transfer Component**

Springboard to Transfer is a purposeful restructuring of the curriculum by linking developmental English and general education courses. Springboard will cluster students into cohort groups that stay together for three semesters. Year one will focus on faculty collaboration and infrastructure development to prepare for a Fall 2005 launch of the first cohort of 88 students. Springboard will also work with math faculty in the first year to explore curricular links and pedagogical approaches, with the goal of incorporating developmental math into the Springboard model. During years two and three, the program will expand to 264 students and incorporate a peer-mentoring component that pairs successful students from the first cohort with incoming basic skills students. A sample of course pairings is provided in the Springboard Report attached as an Appendix.

### **Faculty Development Component**

To foster cross-disciplinary work, the college has designed a plan for faculty development and collaboration to occur each year over the three-year grant period. Activities include:

- A ½-day retreat each semester (Fall/Spring) for Springboard and Developmental Math faculty focused on cross-disciplinary connections and learner-centered pedagogy.
- Monthly Springboard faculty meetings to coordinate syllabi and assignments, discuss shared texts, and orient/train new faculty.
- A 2-day summer retreat to formalize curricular links with math and other disciplines and fine-tune pedagogical approaches.
- Fall Convocation workshops to stimulate college-wide interest in Springboard and reflect upon teaching practices.

Faculty development will emphasize three specific pedagogical strategies designed to cultivate deeper student learning and engagement. These are: 1) Classroom Assessment Techniques; 2) small group work; and 3) student self-assessment mechanisms. The project will schedule guest speakers and collaborate with Staff Development to bring expertise in these areas to the project. To support the institutionalization of learning communities across the college, Chabot will also send a team of faculty and administrators each year to the Learning Communities Institute sponsored by Evergreen State College.

### **Supplemental Instruction (SI) Component**

Based upon our preliminary success with supplemental instruction, Chabot plans to expand SI to five sections of developmental math annually. SI assistants will reinforce basic math skills through tutoring and group work, assisting faculty in the classroom, and daily feedback on student assignments. Each year of the grant, the college will recruit faculty who wish to incorporate SI into their classes; hire and train advanced math students to serve as SI assistants; and evaluate the impact of SI on student learning and engagement. The Chabot WRAC Center currently offers a course in tutorial and group facilitation techniques for WRAC center tutors. The project will use this class as a vehicle for training SI assistants, adapting the curriculum as needed to focus on instructional strategies in math. Additionally, Springboard will implement a peer-mentoring component in years two and three of the grant. Supplemental instruction may serve as a good model for utilizing advanced students in the classroom and, wherever possible, cross-collaboration between Springboard and the SI component will be encouraged.

**Table 1: Year One Activities**

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	SPR 2005	SUM 2005	FALL 2005
	<b>Springboard to Transfer</b>			
A	Finalize online registration mechanisms for linked courses.			
B	Recruit and enroll first cohort of students to start Fall '05.			
C	Develop materials for faculty recruitment, orientation, and training. Launch program website.			
D	Collaborate and plan for Fall '05 linked courses.			
E	Begin instruction of first cohort (88 students).			
F	Evaluate the effectiveness of cohorts through common data indicators and student survey.			
	<b>Faculty Development</b>			
A	Hold a ½ day pedagogy retreat for Springboard and developmental math faculty.			
B	Hold a 2-day summer retreat to develop new linked courses in basic math and other disciplines.			
C	Send a faculty/administrator team to the Evergreen Learning Communities Institute.			
D	Conduct a Fall Convocation workshop to stimulate college-wide interest in Springboard.			
E	Collaborate and plan for Fall '06 linked courses. Formalize structure for curricular links in math.			
F	Orient and train new Springboard faculty.			
	<b>Supplemental Instruction</b>			
A	Identify and select basic math faculty who wish to add an SI component to their courses.			
B	Recruit and hire advanced math students to serve as SI student assistants.			
C	Train SI assistants in tutorial and group facilitation techniques. Adopt and adapt WRAC center tutor-training curriculum for this purpose.			
D	Implement supplemental instruction in five basic math sections.			
E	Evaluate the effectiveness of SI through common data indicators and student survey.			

**D. Evaluation**

To evaluate program effectiveness, the college will aggregate data on course success, grades, and persistence to next level courses for students enrolled in linked courses and SI sections. These data will be compared with student outcomes in stand-alone and non-SI course sections of the same classes. In addition to common indicators, Institutional Research will administer a student survey assessing levels of student engagement and learning in the classroom. Institutional Research currently administers a student satisfaction survey every two years, which collected baseline data in 2003 on student learning and levels of student engagement. Chabot will adapt this instrument for the evaluation of this project. Institutional Research will administer the survey to a sampling of students in Springboard and SI sections each semester and compare outcomes with a sampling of students enrolled in stand-alone and non-SI sections of the same classes. Additionally, Springboard faculty will use classroom assessment techniques and pre/post student self-assessments of learning to regularly capture qualitative feedback on student learning in their classes.

The Office of Institutional Research will be responsible for conducting the program evaluation. The Program Coordinator will analyze and document findings in reports to the Carnegie Foundation. Project faculty will use evaluation findings to improve implementation strategies as needed. The project will also

disseminate findings to college committees so that best practices resulting from this work are incorporated into college-wide improvement plans.

### **E. Institutional Resources/Reform Alignment**

Over the past several years, Chabot has undertaken a number of institutional reform efforts with the goal of transforming the college into a Learning-Centered Institution. Last year, Chabot revised its vision and mission statement to articulate an emphasis on student learning. This year, Chabot will develop college-wide student learning goals and engage in cross-disciplinary work around the assessment of student learning through a new program review process. Every college committee, from enrollment management to facilities planning, is focused on improving student learning across the institution.

Chabot's pre-collegiate program is central to this larger reform work. In fact, much of our best thinking around student learning involve innovations in the developmental curriculum. Last year, the college awarded discretionary funds to 18 projects to research and pilot strategies that enhance student learning. Springboard to Transfer, supplemental instruction in basic math, and learner-centered pedagogy were among the most promising approaches and, thus, form the basis for this proposal. We view this work as so important to the college that Chabot is currently writing a federal Title III Strengthening Institutions grant focused on improving student outcomes in basic skills and expanding learning communities across the college. If funded, Title III will serve as a key vehicle for institutionalizing proposed activities.

Regardless of the outcome of Title III, interdisciplinary instruction and improvements to our basic skills curriculum are central to Chabot reform efforts and will remain priorities of the college. We have already allocated release time for the Springboard Coordinator during Spring semester and committed resources to assist with recruitment and registration for linked courses. Faculty development programming will continue to spark inquiry around learner-centered pedagogy. Program review is fostering campus-wide discussion around the assessment of student learning. The college will leverage the energy around these reform efforts to support and sustain program activities.

### **F. Dissemination Plan**

Chabot College has a history of active collaboration with colleges across the state. Most recently, Chabot has collaborated with De Anza and Los Medanos Colleges to share best practices in basic skills. Springboard faculty have also developed a relationship with CSU Hayward's first year learning community. We envision that these and other partners will have a deep interest in the proposed activities and we will engage them in our work.

As the founder of Puente, Chabot has a long-standing connection to the statewide Puente network through which we will disseminate grant products and evaluation results. We also plan to present at the National Learning Communities Conference in year three of the grant. The Center for Student Success (CSS) is yet another avenue for dissemination. CSS disseminates effective student success and learning assessment practices across the state via a website and an active listserve of over 800 California Community College subscribers. Chabot plans to publish information through professional associations such as the Northern California Writing Centers Association, and the American Mathematical Association of Two Year Colleges. Chabot will use these and related strategies to share what we learn about student learning as a result of this project.