Research has linked the following instructional practices with success for developmental learners (Basic Skills Initiative):

- Sound principles of learning theory are applied in the design and delivery of courses in the developmental program.
- Curricula and practices that have proven to be effective within specific disciplines are employed.
- The developmental education program addresses holistic development of all aspects of the student. Attention is paid to the social and emotional development of the students as well as to their cognitive growth.
- Culturally Responsive Teaching theory and practices are applied to all aspects of the developmental instructional programs and services.
- A high degree of structure is provided in developmental education courses.
- Developmental education faculty employ a variety of instructional methods to accommodate student diversity.
- Programs align entry/exit skills among levels and link course content to college-level performance requirements.
- Developmental education faculty routinely share instructional strategies.
- Faculty and advisors closely monitor student performance.
- Programs provide comprehensive academic support mechanisms, including the use of trained tutors.

Research Brief

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CRC’s Growth Continues to be Curtailed

The decreased number of sections and increased attentiveness to adhering to class maximums has resulted in a decrease of nearly 400 students during Fall 2013 (-2.7%) compared to Fall 2012.

It is interesting to note, however, that if the growth we had experienced between Fall 2005 and Fall 2009 had NOT been curtailed, we would have expected a Fall 2013 enrollment of approximately 21,000 students. This means that this fall we have approximately 6,800 fewer students than would have been expected if we had not experienced budgetary issues.

Continuing The Trend Towards Gender Balance

The trend toward enhanced gender balance, which started in 2009, continued this past year. This trend may reflect internal and/or external factors that disproportionately affect enrollment based on gender, such as changes in the job market, increased enrollment of veterans, and/or FTE reductions.
Increasingly Complex Ethnic Diversity

There has been a dramatic increase in the percentage of Asian/PI students and a recovery of the proportion of our Hispanic student populations this year. In addition, despite the recent changes which provided students with the opportunity to declare multiple ethnicities and/or to identify specific ethnic backgrounds within the larger categories, an increasing percentage of our students are selecting other/unknown ethnicity. This may reflect that the complexity of our diversity extends beyond the type and number of categories provided on the application or students may be increasingly hesitant to declare this information.

What Students Say They Need (from an RP Group study that surveyed students at 13 California Community Colleges)

This study identified and explored the following five themes extracted from the data:

1. Fostering students motivation.
2. Teaching students how to succeed in the postsecondary environment.
3. Structure support to ensure that students:
   - have a goal and know how to achieve it,
   - stay on track,
   - feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed,
   - actively participate in class and extra-curricular activities,
   - feel they are part of the college community, and
   - know that their abilities, experiences and contributions to the campus are recognized and appreciated.
4. Provide comprehensive support to historically underserved students.
5. Although everyone has a role to play in supporting student achievement, faculty must take the lead.

Socio-economic Diversity Changes

Almost 63% of CRC’s Fall 2013 student population have incomes and household sizes that are classified as poverty or low income. In 2012 the Department of Health and Human Services defined a household of one person with an income of less than $11,170 as poverty level. A family of four with income less than $23,050 would also be classified as poverty level. Low-income threshold levels are approximately 1.5 times the poverty level.
Slightly more than 42% of CRC students have parents who have not attended college. CRC continues to have the highest proportion of first-generation students in the District. Course success and persistence rates of our first-generation students are comparable to students who are not first-generation.

This graph shows the continued growth in the percentage of students at CRC who are 40 years of age and older, a trend that has been continuing for several years. The slight decrease in students between the ages of 18-20 most likely reflects the reduction in course offerings combined with registration priorities. Currently nearly 75% of our students are under the age of 30!

Strategies for Supporting Completion:
- Pairing coursework with real life work: This can take a variety of forms: practicums, internships, summer employment, volunteer experiences, etc. (Completion by Design, 2011; Brownell & Swaner, 2010; Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2012)
- Providing opportunities for students to engage in research: Outcomes for underserved students are positive in relation to student persistence and graduate school enrollment. (Brownell & Swaner, 2010; Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2012)
- Course redesign: employing active and cooperative learning practices, technology-supported, experiential and service learning activities. (Completion by Design, 2011; Quint et al, 2011; Nodine, Venezia, & Bracco, 2011; Pennington, 2012)
- Academic support programs/tutoring: In addition to providing academic support for students, provide opportunities for students to tutor other students, especially for wages. (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2012; Completion by Design, 2011; Nodine, Venezia, & Bracco, 2011)
- “Mandatory Intrusive advising”: Aimed at keeping students on track, taking the right courses, strategizing barriers to success. (Completion by Design, 2011; Nodine, Venezia, & Bracco, 2011; Achieving the Dream & Public Agenda, 2011)
The percentage of students who attend CRC during a given fall term and enroll in the subsequent spring term has been increasing for the most part since 2001. CRC's persistence rates are traditionally greater than the other LRCCD schools. It should be noted that a 64.1% persistence rate means that in spring just over 40% of our students are new to the college or are prior CRC students who have taken a leave of absence. This fact also explains why the total number of students served by the college each academic year is approximately 1.4 times our fall enrollment. Persistence reflects a variety of factors, including academic success, financial and life stability, access to necessary classes, and lack of access to a transfer institution.

Strategies for increasing persistence in the first year and beyond:
- First Year Experience Programs (Brownell & Swanner, 2010; Sommo et al, 2012).
- Intensive and Holistic Support (Bennett & Fancher-Ruiz, 2012).
- Academic Alert Programs (Nodine, Venezia, & Bracco, 2011).
- Using technology to support learning (Completion by Design, 2011).
- Providing support where students congregate (Gardenhire-Crooks, Collado, Martin, & Castro, 2010).
- Academic Support Services (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2012).
- Course redesign to facilitate going further, faster, and cheaper (Pennington, 2012).

Strategies for Enhancing Services:
- One-Stop Services (The College Board, 2012).
- Enroll students before terms begin (Tincher-Ladner, 2006).
- Make it mandatory for students to see advisors and complete education plans. (Completion by Design, 2011).
- Increase student awareness of financial resources to support college attendance (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, 2008).
- Provide emergency funds (Geckeler, 2008).
- Centralize financial aid process (Supiano, 2009).
- Services available in multiple languages and at various times of the day. (College Board Advocacy & Policy Center, 2010).
- Quickly resolve holds on registration due to fines (The Advisory Committee, 2008).

Spring course success rates declined in 2008, flat-lined in 2009 to 64.3% and remained at that level until Spring 2012 when they were 67.5%. However, due to enrollment management strategies (change in “Drop” date) the average course success rates declined to 65.8%. Spring 2013 course success rates are 1.5% more than Spring 2009.

Increase in Fall-to-Spring Persistence Continues

Spring 2009: 61.2%
Spring 2013: 64.1%