

FTIC Student Math Placement and Success, Fall 2010

The College's Jigsaw Project provides PSC with an opportunity to assess a variety of processes and practices that impact new students. One facet we are evaluating is our COMPASS testing and placement processes.

The IR office is supporting data-driven decision making throughout the Jigsaw project. To inform discussions about COMPASS math testing and placement, the IR office analyzed the records of 1,090 Fall 2010 students (first-time-in-college, degree-seeking). Data tables present the placement, enrollment, success and retention rates of this cohort.

The data indicates nearly 30% of these part-time students circumvented the math placement process. A smaller portion of full-time students (11%) have no math placement scores.

Of the students with COMPASS math test scores, only 55% enrolled in the math course they placed into during their first semester.

The student success rate (as determined by grades) is highest for students who took college-level coursework (represented by MATH-1XX on the table). About 75% of these students received a grade of A, B, or C. Overall student success decreases with each math course level. (Math 080 was not included in the grade analysis because of the small group size.)

PSC participates in the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP). It is one resource for comparative institutional data. The NCCBP provides PSC its rank and the median values as compared to 280 participating community colleges. Using this comparison, the PSC student success rate in Math 095 and college-level courses is higher than the median scores reported by the NCCBP (represented by green arrows on the grades table). Student success in Math 090 and Math 085 are lower than the median scores (see red arrows).

The retention of students in the various math levels seems to indicate a correlation between grades received and whether a student was retained in the spring semester, *regardless of the course level*. Students who received a D, F, or W were less likely to re-enroll than students who received an A, B, or C.

As the Jigsaw project continues, several committees are taking an in-depth look at many issues connected to COMPASS testing and placement. Ultimately, recommendations from these committees will drive improvements to support student success.

