

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

**Supplement to the June 2005
Report to the Governor and General Assembly
on Underrepresented Groups in Illinois Higher Education**

June 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chicago State University	
Project Elevate	1
Honors College	2
Eastern Illinois University	
TRIO: Student Support Services	4
Governors State University	
Department of Communication Disorders.....	6
Illinois State University	
Minority Academic Scholar Achievement Initiative	8
Northeastern Illinois University	
Learning Communities	10
Northern Illinois University	
Access to Courses and Careers through Educational Support Services	12
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	
Future Scholars	15
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	
Project GAME	18
University of Illinois at Chicago	
Emerging Scholars Program of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.....	21
Minority Engineering Recruitment and Retention Program.....	23
SBC/Ameritech Scholars Program	26
University of Illinois at Springfield	
Leadership in Public Service Program	28
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	
Office of Minority Student Affairs – Academic Services	30
Division of Rehabilitation Services	31
Western Illinois University	
Undergraduate Admissions.....	34

INTRODUCTION

As part of the reporting requirements for the annual *Report to the Governor and General Assembly on Underrepresented Groups in Illinois Higher Education*, public universities are required to identify and describe institutional effective practices that best demonstrate how the institution is addressing the current year's focus topic. Since this year's report focused on the achievement of students from underrepresented groups, this document contains descriptions of programs and initiatives identified by the Illinois public universities as being effective in providing academic support to students from underrepresented groups.

CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Two recent programs especially demonstrate Chicago State University’s ongoing commitment to enroll and graduate a diverse population of students: Project Elevate, a joint project of the Office of Academic Support and the Latino Resource Center, and the Honors College. Project Elevate and the Honors College are worthy of note because they represent Chicago State University’s commitment to increase the number of Hispanic students attending Chicago State University.

Project Elevate

Project Elevate, a grant supported initiative, serves at-risk Hispanic and African American high school and community college students. The purpose of the program is to increase the likelihood of students being prepared to enter the university and, once enrolled, to be successful in their studies. The program has two components: a spring term ACT preparation in math and English, and summer enrichment classes in English, math, and reading. During spring 2004, the focus was on ACT preparation for Hispanic high school seniors; twenty low-income Hispanic students were served. Of these students 80% showed improvement in math and English in their ACT preparation courses. All students expressed, via survey, satisfaction with the level of preparation they received for the ACT.

The summer component of Project Elevate included African American and Hispanic students who attended small, nurturing enrichment classes in English, math and reading during the summer months in order to prepare them to pass their placement examinations in these subjects. Thirty -seven students were served: 11 Hispanic students, 25 African American students, and 1 Nigerian student. Their success rate in meeting placement requirements in math and English is illustrated in the table below.

Math 090		Math 095		Math 098		English		Reading	
Passed	72%	Passed	100%	Passed	100%	Passed	82%	Passed	27%
Failed	18%	Failed	0	Failed	0	Failed	17%	Failed	72%
Incomplete	9%	Incomplete	0	Incomplete	0	Incomplete	0	Incomplete	0
Total N	22		10		3		17		11

Of the thirty-seven students served in the summer component, thirty-four enrolled at Chicago State University. These students are currently receiving additional support through the Office of Academic Support. The support consists of monitoring students’ academic progress through regular reports about class performance provided by instructors at six weeks, nine weeks, and 12 weeks. Students whose academic progress is not satisfactory are given support by advisors in the Office of Academic Support who help students identify priorities and develop habits of time management that lead to academic success. Some students are referred to the Student Success Program which develops students’ study skills. They are also referred to tutoring, if necessary. Midterm grade reports indicate that the majority of these students are successful in navigating their

first semester of college level work. Of the thirty-four students, twenty-nine are enrolled in a full-time schedule of courses (12 hours) with grades of C or above in all of their courses at midterm.

Honors College

While Project Elevate serves students who are at-risk, the Honors College, which inducted its first cohort of students at the beginning of the fall 2004 term, is designed to serve the university's most talented and motivated students, students whose scores on the ACT or SAT, high school class rank, and high school GPA indicate exceptional academic promise. These students are eligible to attend prestigious colleges and universities nation wide. When minority students attend large, primarily white universities, however, they often do not achieve their academic potential because of the challenges associated with acculturating to an unfamiliar social environment. The Honors College at Chicago State University offers these students small classes, a committed and nurturing faculty, enrichment activities, mentors from businesses and organizations in Chicago, and opportunities for social growth.

There are currently twelve students in the Honors College, nine of whom are African American and three of whom are Hispanic. Eight of the students are male, and four of the students are female. In their first semester of study, Honors students are succeeding as evidenced by their midterm grade reports. All twelve Honors students are taking 12-15 credit hours, nine of which are in Honors courses. All earned grades of C or better in their Honors courses at midterm. Information about other courses these students are taking is not currently available.

The goal of the Honors College is to increase the representation of such students in the university's student body. Honors College students benefit from a rigorous and enriched general education curriculum which is interdisciplinary in nature. Because the college employs a cohort model, Honors students attend the majority of their classes together, which fosters strong scholarly and social bonds among the students. In their first semester, the Honors students are taking three common courses: Honors Composition I; Math and Scientific Inquiry I, a course that combines instruction in physics and math and is team-taught by two faculty members, one from each discipline; and Philosophical Inquiry, a team-taught course that looks at the principles of argumentation and philosophical inquiry, taught by two professors, one from philosophy and one from English. The Honors College also provides study and meeting space next to the Dean's office for its students that includes study carrels and computers. This space encourages students to study and learn together and ensures that they communicate regularly with the Dean of the Honors College.

A second, critical goal for the Honors College is to undertake a faculty development program that builds on the experiences of Honors faculty in teaching an enriched, interdisciplinary, student-centered general education curriculum. The Honors faculty met weekly during the spring 2004 term to discuss pedagogy and to hone their teaching skills as well as to design the Honors general education curriculum. Honors faculty are

expected to share their insights with their colleagues in the departments. Thus, as Honors students serve as exemplars for their peers, so do Honors faculty exemplify teaching excellence for their professional peers. The thrust of faculty development will be to present the rationales and supporting data for new ways of teaching and model ways of incorporating innovative teaching methods into the classroom for the purpose of ensuring that all students experience enriched classroom experiences.

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

TRIO: Student Support Services

This federally supported program, started at Eastern in 1997, works with approximately 190 first generation, low income and/or students with disabilities. Students admitted to this safety net program may receive services from their freshman to their senior year. Individual students are provided with a personal advisor, tutors, a computer lab, access to laptop computers, trips, and mentors.

- This four year grant was renewed for a four year cycle (2001-2005) and the office is in the process of writing for a new five-year term 2005-2010.
- The grant for FY04 is worth 237,000 (\$230,000 for base and \$7,000 for technology).
- At the end of FY04, 91% of the students were in good academic standing and 32% had a 3.0 or better GPA.
- FY03 program data is listed below.

2003-2004 TRIO Student Ethnicity Statistics

Ethnicity	# of Students	% of Total Students	Average Cum GPA
Black	120	57.4%	2.39
White	80	38.3%	2.76
Hispanic	8	3.8%	2.43
Asian	0	NA	NA
Other	1	.5%	3.50
Totals	209		2.77

2002-2003 TRIO Student Ethnicity Statistics

Ethnicity	# of Students	% of Total Students	Average Cum GPA
Black	125	58.14%	2.42
White	80	37.2%	2.70
Hispanic	7	3.26%	2.54
Asian	1	0.47%	1.32
Native Am.	1	0.47%	2.34
Other	1	0.47%	0.00
Totals	209		2.31

The program will conduct a freshmen satisfaction survey at the end of each fall semester. The freshmen satisfaction survey is used to assess students' satisfaction with the services they are receiving and to solicit suggestions for improvement. The program will conduct an assessment in the spring semester of each year using focus groups. The focus groups will allow students to provide detailed, qualitative feedback to staff. The statistical measures used by the Program will assist staff in determining whether the Program is successful in improving GPA, retention and graduation rates, and guide programmatic changes to ensure academic success for all participants. At the end of each semester, academic year and summer, the Program will compute participant's retention and graduation results and compare them to the outcome objectives. Academic support and counseling services provided to students will be correlated with academic achievement as well as participants' retention and graduation rates.

GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Communication Disorders Preparation of Personnel in Minority Institutions (CFDA 84.325E): Preparation of Bilingual, Minority, and Disability-Challenged Speech-Language Pathologists

Summary

In the fall of 2004, GSU was awarded a grant from the United States Department of Education to address the critical shortage in minority representation in Speech-Language Pathology. The \$788,592 personnel preparation grant assists bilingual and culturally competent minorities who are earning their Master's in Communication Disorders degree through Governors State University. Upon completion of the GSU program, participants will meet the State of Illinois licensure requirements for speech-language pathologists.

Currently, African American, Latino, and other minority children are at risk of being overrepresented in special education classes because of a shortage of culturally knowledgeable and bilingual professionals in speech-language pathology. According to an Illinois State Board of Education survey, speech-language pathologists rank second in the state for unfilled positions, with shortages in 440 school districts. The GSU program will prepare speech-language pathologists who are better able to handle the needs of the students they serve.

Over the next four years, the grant will provide tuition, fees, books, tutorial, and other academic supports for students while they work on their degree completion requirements. Participants will attend classes at GSU and at the Pilsen community's El Valor Center in Chicago.

The grant addresses the Absolute Priority of a minority institution (i.e., minority student enrollment of at least 25%) preparing speech-language pathology personnel to work with children with oral communication disabilities. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has documented the need for diversity among its membership – an increase in the number of racial minorities, bilingual speakers, and persons with disabilities - to meet the caseload challenges of the new millennium. Most state educational agencies also have documented the shortage of and need for well-trained speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to serve the oral communication needs of children from culturally, economically, and linguistically diverse backgrounds --that is, children who are bilingual, who are monolingual for a language other than English, or who speak non-mainstream dialects.

The project will address local, regional, and national needs by providing much needed training to a cadre of talented minority, bilingual, and disability-challenged SLPs who are prepared to assess and service the oral communication needs of economically, culturally, and linguistically diverse children. The four-year project will train a minimum of 15

diverse master's-level SLPs who will be qualified to work in public schools. These SLPs will serve approximately 900 children annually in underserved districts with culturally, economically, and linguistically diverse children with speech and language disabilities. The project will also serve as a model for other speech-language pathology training programs.

Trainees will be recruited from students currently enrolled in GSU's graduate and undergraduate programs in Communication Disorders; from students enrolled at programs listed in the national directory of the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders, including Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, programs serving Native-American students, and Traditionally White Institutions; and from child-serving occupations such as speech-language paraprofessionals, special education teachers, early childhood teachers, and regular-education teachers working in Chicago and suburban school districts with diverse student populations.

This unique graduate program will be delivered through distance-learning technology from GSU to an off-campus child-family center (El Valor) in one of Chicago's Latino communities (Pilsen). With the exception of the practicum assignments, trainees will complete the program on a part-time basis while working full-time in schools or early intervention programs. The community-based practicum assignments must be completed on a full-time basis during the fourth and final year of the program primarily because school speech-language practica are not available to us during the summer. In addition to a rigorous graduate curriculum, students will participate in monthly seminars that address culture-fair assessments and intervention procedures for children who are bilingual, monolingual for a language other than English, or who speak non-mainstream dialects. Trainees will receive tuition and fee scholarships, an allowance for books and materials, and a small stipend for incidentals such as transportation or babysitters. To maximize retention, each student will be assigned a mentor from among area SLPs, preceptors will be present at all off-campus distance-delivered courses, and tutors will be provided as needed. Additionally, the project includes a solid internal and external evaluation process.

GSU is uniquely positioned to administer this project. It was founded in 1969 as an upper-division institution 35 miles south of Chicago. It has a service area of Chicago, its surrounding suburbs, and Northwest Indiana. GSU is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and serves junior and senior undergraduates seeking baccalaureate degrees and master's level graduate and professional school candidates. Its primary mission is to provide quality accessible and affordable education to non-traditional and underrepresented populations of students. The average age of GSU's students is 34; 70% are women; 34.7% are minority; most are first generation college attendees; and most attend school part-time while working full-time. GSU's Program in Communication Disorders is fully accredited by its national accrediting body, and it is the only graduate program in Illinois with a part-time option for cohorts of speech-language pathology students. Finally, GSU is one of the nation's pioneer institutions in distance learning education.

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Minority Academic Scholar Achievement Initiative (MASAI)

This year, the Office for Intercultural Programs and Services piloted a program entitled the Minority Academic Scholar Achievement Initiative (MASAI). The Office partnered with University College and the Minority Student Academic Center to provide a highly structured peer mentor program for first year students of color. The intent of the program is to help the first year student to manage the rigors of academic demands and social adjustments, and to provide a safety net through a network of peer and staff support by providing resources to guide them during this critical first year.

The program assists in the education and development of first-year students from underrepresented backgrounds. The program assists in the education and development of these students by providing services that focus on the academic, professional, and cultural issues at Illinois State University and the broader society. This is part of a concerted effort to increase recruitment and retention of students of color, in support of the core value of diversity according to *Educating Illinois*, Illinois State University's strategic plan.

Program Structure

Faculty mentors volunteer their time and the program hires more than 20 upper-class students who are paired with fifty-seven first-year students to assist in their transition to Illinois State University. The program is open to any student who wishes to participate, but it works closely with the Office of Admissions to identify Minority Academic Scholars and with the Office of Students Support Services to invite students to participate.

The ideal model includes one mentor, one or more students identified as Minority Academic Scholars working with one or more students from the Office of Students Support Services. Each peer mentor is assigned to work with up to three first-year students. Peer mentors and mentees are divided into four community groups. These community groups consist of five mentors and their mentees. The community group structure cultivates a social network and allows for the program coordinators to easily monitor the progress of the participants.

Objectives for the program include:

- educating students and being of valuable assistance in their academic and cultural development;

- providing personal and professional development to peer mentors to support personal growth;
- improving the grade point average of all program participants (peer mentees and mentors); and
- increasing program participants' knowledge of and involvement with the various campus units' resources, services, and programs.

The responsibilities for peer mentors are as follows:

- Meet with each mentee at the Minority Student Academic Center (MSAC) for two hours per week to assist with and collaborate on academic work.
- Attend four mandatory developmental programs per semester with their mentees. These developmental programs are intended to foster personal and professional growth. Topics of past developmental programs have included: *Time Management, How to Pick a Major, Better Counseling Skills, and Tunnel of Oppression.*
- Work with the community group to provide one peer social for the semester in order to foster social networking.
- Attend cultural programs sponsored by the Office of Intercultural Programs and Services.
- Schedule a mandatory meeting and a one-on-one meeting with the coordinator, once a semester.

Outcomes

Because this is the first year the MASAI program has been implemented, only preliminary results are available, specifically midterm grades. At the midterm of the semester, forty-five mentees had a grade point average at or above good academic standing (2.0 or higher). Twelve students had a grade point average of 1.9 or lower.

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Learning Communities

Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

The Learning Communities Initiative at Northeastern Illinois University encourages teaching excellence and increases minority student retention and learning. In doing so, it promotes the broader university goals of recruiting and retaining a diverse student body and fostering student-centered learning.

Although most communities are housed in the College of Arts and Sciences, they involve courses from all university units, including the College of Education and the Department of Academic Development. Proyecto Pa'Lante is one of two special programs in the Department of Academic Development. The program was established in 1972 and has been recruiting and providing academic support for primarily Latino students who demonstrate academic potential but may not meet general admission requirements. Once admitted, the program provides support services for its students in the areas of orientation, academic advising, academic seminar courses, tutoring, career development, and cultural reinforcement. Proyecto Pa'lante adopted the learning community model as a means of academic support for its students in fall, 2003.

A Learning Community is a block of two or more classes that are shared by a single group of students. The group engages in a connected learning experience. Learning communities at NEIU provide links between classes as diverse as Economics and Earth Science, Communications and Drama, Political Science, and English.

Date of Implementation

The Learning Community Initiative at Northeastern Illinois University has resulted in nine new learning communities sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences in 2002-2003 and ten in 2003-2004. Interest in this initiative has steadily increased since its inception.

Description of Program Elements or Strategies that Make the Program Successful

Learning communities offer exciting ways to learn by engaging instructors and students in the education experience – instructors get to know the students in their classes, and the classroom begins to function as a cohesive unit rather than a collection of individual personalities with varying goals and methods.

Students who enroll in Learning Communities adapt more quickly to university life as a result of the increased bonding among individual members of the community. This adaptation enables students to work collaboratively and to earn higher grade point averages.

By promoting an open sharing of ideas within the classroom and by increasing the comfort level of students among one another, students more readily admit to their fears and perceived inabilities. This admission leads to the discovery that the demands of a university education are more manageable than students believe at first.

All classes that make up the learning communities meet the same requirements that they would meet if offered individually, yet they have been specially designed to work together as part of an integrated learning experience. Students actually derive more from individual classes taken together than they do if taken separately.

Evidence of Success

Students who participated in the Proyecto Pa'Lante Learning Community during fall, 2003 demonstrated a 100% fall to spring retention rate, compared to the 92% fall to spring retention rate for non-participants. Academic success rates showed a similar positive outcome: students who participated in the Learning Communities initiative completed the fall, 2002 semester with an average cumulative GPA of 3.01 while non-participants completed with a 2.76 GPA.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Access to Courses and Careers through Educational Support Services (ACCESS)

Goals and Objectives

The guiding mission of the Access to Courses and Careers through Educational Support Services (ACCESS) program is to provide opportunities for students to build academic skills and promote academic adjustment, thereby improving academic success, retention, and graduation rates through academic support services. Further, ACCESS supports the diversity of the N.I.U. student body by targeting students for its services who are most academically at-risk, either by admission status or background/deficiencies in specific academic skill areas.

ACCESS is marketed to departments on campus that work with underrepresented students.

ACCESS is in regular contact with Complete Help and Assistance Necessary for a College Education (CHANCE) counselors regarding the performance of CHANCE students and the regularity with which CHANCE students are using ACCESS services.

ACCESS provides Supplemental Instruction (SI) in courses in which CHANCE students are most likely to have difficulty. In addition, SI is also provided in all sections of the developmental math program for CHANCE-admitted students. ACCESS provides, through Peer Assisted Learning (PAL), tutoring in courses that are historically difficult, and/or high request courses by students, particularly those in CHANCE. Tutors for our highest demand courses staff the walk-in tutoring centers. For individual tutoring on a long-term basis, PAL is staffed by student tutors to meet demands for most courses for which there are requests. PAL and SI both work aggressively to recruit a diverse array of tutors that reflect the population of students that are served. This makes the program more approachable for underrepresented students.

All programs are geared to provide support in course content along with academic and study skill building.

Demonstrable Progress Toward Meeting Goals and Objectives

PAL provided support for 1,064 students last year, an increase of 18% from the year prior. There were 5,090 hours of tutoring delivered. Of those, 814 students utilized the walk-in tutoring centers in the residence halls, doubling the numbers from two years ago. The number of students, contacts, and tutoring hours served by the program has increased every year since 2000. Tutoring was provided in 104 different courses. SI served 614 students in two semesters in Chemistry last year. It also served 675 students in the

CHANCE developmental mathematics courses. There was a quarter to a full letter grade difference between students who utilized SI and those who did not in every course. Pilot programs for satellite tutoring were done during this past year to support students in specific majors and colleges. Tutoring was held in Barsema Hall and in Graham Hall for courses pertaining to majors in Business and Education, respectively.

The racial breakdown of CHANCE-admitted students using our services in 2003-2004 was fairly consistent with prior years. Of the nearly 300 CHANCE students who used services, racial breakdown was:

RACE	SI FY 04	PAL FY 04
Asian	9%	6%
African Am	63%	73%
Lat/Hisp	14%	11%
Native Am	0%	.3%
Other	2%	3%
Caucasian	12%	6%
Female	59%	62%
Students w Disability	N/A	18 Total

Race/gender information was not available for traditionally admitted students who use our services and information on students with disabilities is only available for those who choose to disclose conditions.

Demand for academic support services through ACCESS has increased each year since our services became campuswide in 1997. We continue to grow, develop new services, and improve on existing services based on demand, student evaluations and recommendations, faculty requests, and other information from various stakeholders.

Despite clear progress, ACCESS is still establishing itself as a campuswide service. However, progress in the area of outreach and marketing has been slow. We do not currently know exactly how many students have not used our services that should have, but we feel our growth indicates that progress will continue to be made in improving outreach, access, and service quality.

Goals and Objectives to Improve College Readiness

ACCESS provides walk-in tutoring services, one-on-one tutoring services, supplemental instruction, and other support services for students who require academic assistance to be successful in their chosen courses and majors.

All aspects of our services are designed to improve study skills as well as learn academic content. Our nationally certified tutor-training program helps tutors learn to ask students questions that assess these skills. Then, tutors introduce ideas in how to improve them.

Evidence of Effectiveness

In addition to statistical assessment data provided herein, students are surveyed each year with regard to their satisfaction with services. The program has received very positive reactions from students who have access to our services. Student comments include:

“The tutors are awesome and eager to help students learn.”

“The tutoring center is a very useful program and is helpful to get homework done.”

“The tutoring center is a successful program that helps me learn my math skills better.”

Methods Implemented to Address College Readiness and Transition

In our profession, college readiness and transition takes the form of better study skills and strategies. Helping students build these skills is an important part of our tutor and SI Leader training. Our staff has been invited to speak with UNIV 101 classes to instruct students in these areas. Our website includes information about these skills as well.

New Initiatives

We remain open to fresh ideas that will help provide better academic support to students. ACCESS uses standard academic service practices for its tutoring and SI programs following guidelines from our professional organizations. Each semester, we receive requests or ideas from faculty, students, our tutors, support service directors from other areas, etc. In the past year, along with our traditional programming, we have explored new ways to provide services including: additional study groups in high-risk courses, special tutoring arrangements at faculty request using faculty recommended tutors, and satellite tutoring labs at locations more convenient to some students.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE

Future Scholars

Purpose

Since 1991, Southern Illinois University Carbondale has sponsored a pre-college academic program for scholastically promising minority high school students. The accelerated college entry program, titled “Future Scholars,” is conducted during the month of July. It was designed to provide pre-college high school graduates, an “advanced” group, with an opportunity to take college credit courses in English, mathematics, and/or speech and to offer upper-level high school students, an “intermediate” group, an opportunity to participate in course instruction in a university environment as a preparatory experience. Students also participate in workshops and seminars in career development and personal development.

Description of Program

Financial assistance (tuition, books, housing, and meals) for all participants is provided by SIUC. Normally 40 students—20 advanced and 20 intermediate—are selected to participate. Generally, participants are from Illinois high schools and represent a diverse geographical background.

The general goals of the program are to a) acquaint students with the SIUC residential culture and requirements of personal responsibility and maturity through a living experience in a dormitory setting on the SIUC campus; b) build academic skills in English, mathematics, and speech; c) prepare students for university entrance and successful academic performance; and d) help students focus on career development through seminars and workshops on career options.

In the beginning, most of the students were from the southern Illinois area. Recently, many of the advanced students have been from the Chicago area. At the conclusion of the four-week session, post-program evaluations are conducted to assess:

- Course grades and grade point averages
- Instructor evaluation of student performance
- Student perspective of the prestige of selected occupations
- Student evaluation of courses and instructors
- Student evaluation of the program
- Parent evaluation of the program

In the past two years, the program has been restructured to accept only entering freshmen who have enrolled at SIUC. This decision was reluctantly made to maximize the funds available to support the program and to enhance the recruitment of talented minority students to SIUC. A review of follow-up data revealed that, although many of the

students who participated in the intermediate program were attending college, many were not selecting SIUC.

The success of the program can be directly attributed to some of the following characteristics:

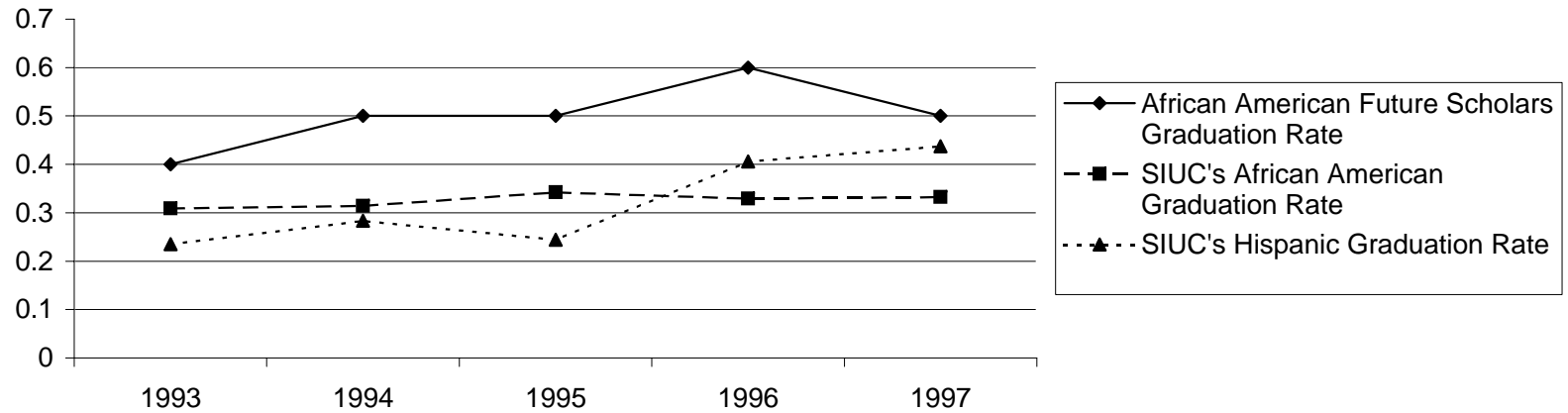
- Motivated students
- Supportive parents
- Focus on academic development
- Trained and caring professional instructional staff
- High expectations
- Supportive environment
- Opportunity to interact with students of similar interests, values, and goals

Evidence of Success

Evaluations obtained from student parents, university instructors, counselors, and administrative staff indicate that the Future Scholars program has been a success. The majority of the students do very well in their initial college courses. Most students in the advanced courses achieve grade points of 3.5 or higher, and many complete their first college semester with a 4.0 grade point average. Most of the intermediate high school students demonstrated the potential to earn A's or B's in freshman-level courses.

Overall, remarks by students and parents indicated that both groups were extremely positive and highly satisfied with the program's direction and the college experience. Students report that they gained new academic skills and study techniques that will benefit them in their educational pursuit, and they found that the program met their expectations. Parents report that their children had developed stronger interests in their education and in selecting a major and were demonstrating more self-confidence after participating in the summer program. The sixth-year graduation rates of African American Future Scholars generally compare well with those of the total African American and Hispanic student population (see graph, next page).

Comparison of Sixth-Year Graduation Rates of African American Future Scholars to SIUC's Total African American and Hispanic Student Population



17

	African American Future Scholars Graduation Rate	SIUC's African American Graduation Rate	SIUC's Hispanic Graduation Rate
1993	29.4%	30.9%	23.5%
1994	57.1%	31.4%	28.3%
1995	53.3%	34.3%	24.4%
1996	35.3%	32.9%	40.6%
1997	38.9%	33.3%	43.8%

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

Project GAME (Goal-Oriented African American Males Excel)

Research both at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and nationally indicates that African American male students have significantly lower rates of persistence and retention than other students. According to data reported by Institutional Research at SIUE, 79% of Black, non-Hispanic male students entering the university in fall of 1994 were no longer in attendance by the 1997 academic year. In its "Status Report on Minorities in Education," the American Council on Education cited the lack of positive self concept, unrealistic self appraisal, the negative aspects of racism, the lack of long-range goals, and the lack of a strong support person or network as the primary factors contributing to the lack of retention of African American male students. Project GAME was developed and implemented to improve academic success, persistence rates, and retention of African American male students attending SIUE.

Program Process and Procedures

Each year since fall 1999, between 25 and 30 newly admitted residential male African American freshman students have been invited to participate in the Project GAME program. Project GAME is designed as an intensive one-year experience. During the fall semester, the participants are required to enroll in University 112 (University Experience), a two-credit academic course that focuses on personal development and honing academic skills. Specific issues include developing self-concept, personal image, college support systems, enhancing cultural identity, maintaining connections with family, volunteerism, and planning for a career. During the spring semester, participants are required to enroll in Academic Development 115 (College Study Skills), a one-hour academic course. Issues addressed include learning styles, time management, test anxiety, test taking skills, and stress management. During the spring semester, Project GAME students participate in organized volunteer projects that directly impact the Black community and interact with business and community leaders. During the year, Project GAME students have on-going mentoring and 24-hour access to program staff.

Objectives of the Program

Improving the retention, academic success, and persistence rates of African American male students are the goals of the program. Each Project GAME participant is expected to strive to reach the following objectives:

- Participants will achieve a grade point average of 2.5 or higher at the end of the freshman year.
- Participants will return to SIUE to begin their sophomore year.

- Participants will identify a potential career.
- Participants will become involved in campus life.
- Participants will achieve the grade of “A” in University 112.

All participants sign and agree to GAME’s *Commitment to Success Contract* in which they pledge to:

- *Give 100% to the goals and expectations of the project.*
- *Assist in the development and growth of the university by serving as a model and mentor to others who might benefit from my experience.*
- *Improve my mental, physical, and spiritual development.*
- *Gain a knowledge and appreciation of my history and culture.*
- *Focus on goals and objectives that will enhance my career development.*
- *Improve my ability to communicate more effectively.*
- *Strive for the highest level of academic performance.*
- *Develop my leadership and professional skills.*
- *Volunteer for programs and activities that will allow me to contribute in positive ways to the development of the African American community.*
- *Maintain a commitment and connection to my family by contacting a significant member at least once a week.*
- *Attend the required study sessions outside of class.*
- *Participate in both the fall and spring semesters of Project GAME.*

Project GAME Staff

Project GAME faculty and staff include the vice chancellor for student affairs, the director of Student Support Services, the assistant to the provost, and a graduate assistant. Various other faculty members and professionals from academic and student service units provide classroom presentations and program activities. Community leaders and former successful students serve as classroom presenters and role models.

Program Assessment and Evaluation

The university's director of assessment evaluated the effectiveness of Project GAME using grade point average, retention, and hours completed toward graduation as measures. The director concluded that Project GAME fosters increased academic performance that is significant, increased retention, and some enhanced progress toward degree completion. The table below gives comparison data between Project GAME students, a non-GAME African American male cohort group, and other full-time, first-time freshman cohorts. Evaluation of the data shows Project GAME has had a positive influence on retention when compared to other cohort groups.

Project GAME Retention

Entering Year	# of Project GAME students	# in Non-GAME cohort (Student Support Services African American male freshmen)	Still Enrolled Fall-	Project GAME (Number)	Non GAME (Number)	Full-time, first-time freshman cohorts regardless of race or gender
1999	30	40	2000	76% (23)	60% (24)	71.2%
			2001	60% (18)	42% (17)	58.7%
			2002	46% (14)	37.5% (15)	36%
			2003	46% (14)	40% (16)	33.8% (estimated)
			Graduated	20% (6)	10% (4)	18.6%
2000	29	23	2001	68% (20)	60% (14)	72.2%
			2002	48% (14)	47% (11)	58.8%
			2003	34.5% (10)	47% (11)	55.3% (estimated)
			Graduated	3.4% (1)	0	0.7% (estimated)
2001	17	21	2002	70% (12)	61% (13)	68.8%
			2003	53% (9)	47.6% (10)	58.6% (estimated)
2002	23	23	2003	78% (18)	87% (20)	75%
2003	28	23	2004	Not available	Not available	Not available

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Emerging Scholars Program (ESP) of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Program

The Emerging Scholars Program (ESP) was initiated by the Department of Mathematics 15 years ago (in the fall of 1989) as a Professional Development Program in Math, following the model developed by Uri Triesman at the University of California at Berkley. In this program, workshops run parallel to courses. At the beginning, the program was for introductory courses but, in 1993, the program was expanded to include upper level courses in math and physics. Also, in that year, it was renamed ESP.

The program director and teaching assistants were funded by the Department and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The program has also been funded by several NSF grants including LSAMP (Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation) which, for the past 10 years, supported a group of scholars who were associated with ESP.

Goals/Objectives

The goal of the program is to increase the success rate of minority students in math and physics courses, especially at the introductory level.

Participation/Outcome

Recently, Jaime Brugueras, Luisette Hernandez-Gonzales, and Anatoly Libgober analyzed eleven years of student academic achievement data (1991-2002) of students who had participated in the ESP and compared them to that of non-ESP students¹. Over that period, the numbers of students in the ESP program were: 413 in Calculus I, 315 in Calculus II, 131 in Calculus III, 226 in Introductory Physics I, 130 in Natural Sciences, and 306 in General Physics I.

The followings are some of the results of their analysis:

- For ESP students in Mathematics
 - They are more likely to earn a grade of A or B in beginning math courses (Pre-Calculus, Calculus I, II and III) than those students not in the program, though this is not true for more advanced math courses (such as differential equations).

¹ "Statistical Analysis of the Emerging Scholars Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago," Jaime Brugueras, Luisette Hernandez-Gonzales, and Anatoly Libgober, 2004.

- Similar results are seen for both gender and for all racial/ethnic groups. The success rates (percentages earning an A or a B) for ESP women students versus that for non-ESP women are: 52.5% (versus 38.7%) for Pre-Calculus, 56.4% (versus 38.5%) for Calculus I, 50.5% (versus 49.1%) for Calculus II, and 65.1% (versus 54.4%) for Calculus III. For African American students, the success rates for ESP students versus that for non-ESP students are: 35% (versus 21%) for Pre-Calculus, 44% (versus 23%) for Calculus I, 50% (versus 25%) for Calculus II, 62% (versus 33%) for Calculus III. For Hispanic students, the corresponding comparisons are: 48% (versus 30%) for Pre-Calculus, 48% (versus 32%) for Calculus I, 44% (versus 35%) for Calculus II, and 61% (versus 46%) for Calculus III.

Over the period 1991-2002, success rate (percentage earning an A or a B) for ESP African American students is almost twice as large as that for non-ESP African American students.

- 58% of the mathematics ESP students graduated within 8 years of entrance to the University while 42% of the mathematics non-ESP students graduated within 8 years of entrance.

Over the period 1991-2002, the 8-year graduation rate is more than 10 percentage points higher for ESP students compared to non-ESP students.

- For ESP students in Physics

- There is no evidence that they are more likely to earn a grade of A or B in beginning physics courses (Introductory Physics and General Physics I)
- However, 77% of the physics ESP students graduated within 8 years of entrance to the University while 66% of the physics non-ESP students graduated within 8 years for entrance.

Minority Engineering Recruitment and Retention Program (MERRP) of the College of Engineering

Program

Through the Minority Engineering Recruitment and Retention Program (MERRP), the UIC College of Engineering has been actively involved in the national effort to recruit, retain, and graduate African American, Hispanic, and Native American students since the late 1960s. MERRP offers pre-college initiatives for students prior to their enrollment at UIC, an orientation course at the start of their enrollment, as well as supplemental instruction and other academic initiatives during their careers at UIC. It also provides non-instructional services to its students from underrepresented groups.

Pre-college initiatives include three summer experiences designed to encourage high school and incoming ethnic minority freshmen to maintain their interest in engineering. They are (1) The Engineering High School Institute; (2) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Institute (STEM); and, (3) Preparation for Majoring in Engineering (Prep-ME, which was described earlier in this report).

The orientation course is also used to facilitate student participation in supplemental instruction (SI), group instruction in science, engineering, and mathematics courses outside the classroom. SI sessions are offered throughout the year in mathematics, physics, chemistry, and some engineering courses. SI is not a traditional approach to tutoring; rather, it employs graduate teaching assistants, advanced undergraduate students, and MERRP alumni who work as instructors under the supervision of office administrative staff. The instructors are responsible for five to ten students who receive assistance in a group setting. Students are encouraged to work together and assist each other in mastering the required concepts.

Throughout their careers in the College of Engineering, MERRP participants also benefit from academic resources such as the Science and Math Academic Review Technique (SMART) and non-instructional services and activities including an advising and problem solving component, a peer mentoring program known as Emerging Leaders in Technology and Engineering (ELITE), and professional development including internship opportunities and career seminars.

Goals/Objectives

MERRP's goals are to increase the number of African American, Hispanic, and Native American students enrolled in the College of Engineering and to increase the retention and graduation percentages of these students.

Participation/Outcome

This integrated approach of pre-college initiatives, academic initiatives, and non-instructional programs has resulted in academic success and professional achievement of the MERRP participants. Since 1994, more than 28,000 pre-college and undergraduate students nationwide have used services provided by MERRP. According to the 2004 NSF report prepared by the College of Engineering, *Minority in Engineering: A Mandate for Action*, the program has improved significantly the GPA and graduation rate of its participants, and many of them have enjoyed successful careers after graduation.

GPA

According to the 2004 College of Engineering NSF Report *Minorities in Engineering: A Mandate for Action*, from 1997 to 2003, the average first-semester GPA of Prep-ME students is 1.2 points higher in math, 1.65 points higher in chemistry, and 1.0 points higher overall, when compared to students who do not participate in the pre-college summer program.

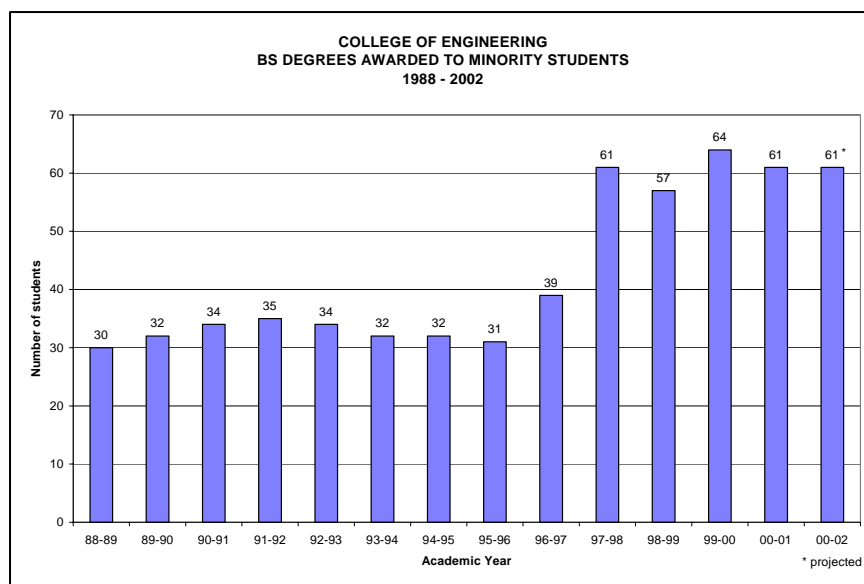
GPA for MERRP participants is, in general, one full letter grade higher than that of the non-participants.

Participants in SI also have higher GPAs. In the fall of 2001, for example, the overall GPA for SI participants was 4.3/5.0 for those attending 80% of sessions or more versus 3.3/5.0 for students who attended less than 80% of sessions, one full letter grade higher for the SI participants.

The overall academic performance for the MERRP students for the 2001 and 2002 academic year proves that participants perform above average in their coursework. In 2001, 83% of the males and 92% of the females earned a “C” or better and, for both groups, 31% earned “B” or better. In 2002, 86% of the males and 92% of the females earned a “C” or better and, for both groups, 30% earned “B” or better.

Number of Bachelor’s Degrees Awarded

There has been an increase in the number of engineering degrees awarded to minority students as illustrated in the following graph:



Retention Rate

UIC is among the top 50 of institutions enrolling the largest number of minority freshmen in engineering. In 2004, underrepresented minority student enrollment represents 18% of the total Engineering enrollment². Graduation rate of MERRP students have increased by 100% from 1996 to 2002. Compared to these top institutions in the Midwest, the College of Engineering graduated the largest number of students and earned the highest graduation percentage total in 2001, according to its 2004 NSF Report. Over the past 10 years, more than 400 students have earned their bachelor’s degrees from UIC in Engineering.

Employment

Graduates of the program hold employment in industry and government throughout the United States. Some of the major employers of UIC minority alumni include SBC-Ameritech, Motorola, International Truck and Engine Company, Lucent Technologies, Department of Transportation, Excelon, Caterpillar, and the Boeing Company.

² Data source: UIC Student Data Book 1998-2002, Office of Data Resources and Institutional Analysis, Table 27, pp. 39.

SBC/Ameritech Scholars Program of the College of Business Administration (CBA)

Program

The SBC/Ameritech Scholars Program serves underrepresented minority students (Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics). The current funding cycle of the SBC/Ameritech Scholars Program of CBA began in 1999. It assists underrepresented minority undergraduate CBA students by providing financial assistance and a mentoring experience. Scholars are awarded a scholarship of \$2,500 each year until their graduation from UIC. In addition, they serve as academic tutors to elementary school students in the neighborhood surrounding UIC.

SBC/Ameritech scholars in CBA are 53.5% African American, 46% Hispanic, and 0.5% Native American. Their average GPA is about 5% higher than that for all CBA undergraduate students and 10% higher than that of underrepresented minority students in the College. Their six-year graduation rate is a whopping 86.7%. It is 30 percentage points higher than that for the College and more than doubles that of UIC's underrepresented minority students.

Goals/Objectives

The program was designed to improve the academic achievement and the graduation rate of underrepresented minority students from the College of Business Administration. This increased graduation rate would eventually lead to a more diverse workforce for SBC. The scholarship award allows students, many of whom would not be able to afford to go to college, to focus on their academics instead of how they will fund their education. The mentoring experience enables the scholars to develop their skills as future business leaders.

Participation/Outcome

Since its inception in 1999, the program has assisted more than 240 students. About 62% of the scholars are women and 38% are men. The ethnic breakdown is about 53.5% African Americans, 46% Hispanics, and 0.5% Native Americans.

The SBC/Ameritech scholars have a higher average GPA and a much higher graduation rate compared to their peers. The average GPA for the scholars is 4.08/5.0. It is about 5% higher than that of all CBA undergraduate students and 10% higher than CBA underrepresented minority students.

The graduation success rate of this program is even more profound. The six-year graduation rate for SBC/Ameritech scholars is 86.7%, a full 30 percentage points above the college statistic and 40 percentage points above the UIC campus rate of 45.5%. This 86.7% graduation rate is very impressive and more than doubles the campus six-year graduation rate for African American and Hispanics, which are 30.2% and 38.9%, respectively.

These statistics are but some of the measures of the tremendous impact the SBC/Ameritech Scholars Program has had on the academic achievement of the underrepresented groups. It is evident that without this program many scholars would not be able to afford the University and many others would take longer to graduate because they would need to work more hours to support themselves. Without this program, these students would not be able to succeed at the levels that they have achieved.

Testimonies from current SBC scholars recipients can best illustrate some of the benefits of the SBC Scholars Program:

Simeko Washington's (a four-time recipient) experience is typical of the individuals participating in the SBC Scholars Program.

“As a four-year recipient of the [SBC/] Ameritech Scholarship, I can honestly say that this program not only provides financial benefits, but also serves as a conduit to provide community service. The scholarship has been a financial blessing, allowing me to focus more on my studies. To an even further extent, the scholarship has enabled me to cultivate outstanding relationships with children and their families. Helping students reach their potential has been one of the most valuable college experiences thus far.”

Ludlow Franklin is a second-year recipient and gives a lot of credit to SBC for their generous contributions to students like himself.

“Over the past year I have been able to focus more on school work because of the Ameritech/SBC scholarship. Without the opportunity given to me by Ameritech/SBC I would need a part time job or possibly a full[-]time position to help support myself. If I did not receive the scholarship, I would have to take fewer courses, thus increasing the length of time before graduation. Thanks to the Ameritech/SBC scholarship program, graduation is within sight.”

Diana Medina began her academic journey at UIC in the Fall 2003 as a beginning freshman.

“Thank you for giving me, as well as other students in the College of Business Administration at the University of Illinois at Chicago an opportunity to receive your financial assistance and mentoring experience through the SBC Scholars Program. This is a great opportunity to gain experience in the business field in addition to giving back to the community. Thank you again for offering us this great opportunity, it will be very useful for our college careers.”

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD

Leadership in Public Service Program

This section provides a description of the UIS Leadership in Public Service Program which exemplifies an institutional “effective practice” that supports the academic achievement of minorities.

The University of Illinois at Springfield (formerly Sangamon State University) with the support of the Illinois Board of Regents, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois General Assembly, initiated the Minority Leadership in Public Service Program (now called the Leadership in Public Service Program) in 1985 to provide the opportunity and maximum access to higher education for minority students interested in pursuing a career in public service. The program was designed to begin at the junior year of college and culminate with the baccalaureate degree.

To be eligible, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 and submit two reference letters describing involvement in community service. Student applicants also must write a 3 to 5 page narrative addressing a community issue and what type of approach they would take to address that issue.

The program requires students to enroll full-time and pursue a major that is compatible with a career in public service. Students receive financial assistance and are required to perform an internship related to their major during their senior year. Students also have one-on-one meetings with the Director at least once per semester and participate in small-group interactions, workshops, guest speaker sessions, and bi-monthly meetings. Examples of group projects include the development and design of a program for World AIDS Day at the State Capitol and the development and implementation of the first annual UIS Student Lobby Day. Group projects are designed to help enhance leadership skills as well as to develop team-building skills. Meetings and workshops cover such topics as career options, preparation of resumes, and personal budgeting.

Each student is required to complete a community service project, preferably one that will have a lasting impact. Examples of recent projects are the creation of a resource book that identifies such services as food distribution and child immunization services, the development of a campus club called the Descendants of Africa, and the creation of a support organization for college students with children who live on campus.

** Highlights **

During the past 19 years, approximately 160 students have participated in the UIS Leadership in Public Service Program which was created to support the academic achievement of minority students.

Of that group, more than 40 have gone on to graduate school.

In the past, the Leadership in Public Service Program primarily served African American students. In 2002, however, five of the 18 student participants were Hispanic Americans.

Contributing to the vibrancy of the Leadership in Public Service Program are the following elements and strategies:

- active recruitment of community college student leaders based on recommendations from college presidents, community college Phi Theta Kappa chapters, or student government;
- a committee with representation from Office of Admissions, financial aid, Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, and current Leadership participants to review applications and interview candidates;
- working with small groups (the maximum number of participants admitted is 10 per academic year);
- appointing faculty advisors for the students;
- developing close relationships with the participants;
- encouraging participant input into the process (e.g., evaluating meetings, helping identify topics for workshops); and
- requiring participants to conduct a public service project.

Approximately 160 students have participated in the Leadership in Public Service Program during the past 19 years. Indicators of success include:

- three participants have been elected president of the student senate or student government;
- four participants have been elected a Student Representative to the Board of Regents or the University of Illinois Board of Trustees;
- an estimated 10 participants have served as student government representatives;
- more than 20 participants have served as officers in campus student organizations;
- more than 40 participants have been accepted to graduate school;
- at least three participants have gone on to Ph.D. programs;
- one participant has completed law school and passed the bar;
- at least six participants have received the ICEOP fellowship for graduate studies; and
- a number of participants have received the Whitney Young Fellowship for graduate studies.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) - Academic Services

Purpose

Tutorial services were provided under the auspices of Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) beginning in 1968. Through the 1970's, the program depended mostly upon volunteer tutors and then was funded as an OMSA program beginning in 1987. OMSA's Academic Services component provides course-specific tutoring, supplemental instruction, and individualized study skills instruction designed to assist students in adjusting to the academic demands of the University. Assistance is provided in over 100 courses (the vast majority of which are at the freshman-sophomore level) each semester. As tutors are trained to assist students with study skills as well as course content, OMSA staff urge all freshmen to use such services as a means of acclimating to the academic demands of the university.

Tutoring is usually provided by undergraduates who excelled in the particular course at this university and occasionally by graduate students. Supplemental Instruction (SI) targets courses required of large numbers of students and that function as "gatekeepers" for certain curricula. SI is a form of course assistance that is facilitated by an advanced undergraduate or graduate student who attends course lectures and works with students in small groups. Many tutor and SI groups meet once each week, although drop-in tutoring is provided daily in mathematics and several hours each week in chemistry and physics. Study skills instruction in time management, textbook study, lecture note-taking, and test-taking is provided individually by a trained graduate instructor.

Program Elements/Strategies

- As academic services are designed to assist students in adjusting quickly to the university's academic demands and maintaining a high level of academic performance, freshmen are urged to seek assistance proactively, early in the fall semester, to prevent the necessity of "catching up" later.
- Tutors are either undergraduates who excelled in the course they are tutoring or graduate students with appropriate expertise. Thus, tutors have first-hand knowledge of the way in which particular courses are taught at this university.
- Tutors receive training in the form of several meetings during the first semester in which they work and are required to attend refresher meetings in subsequent semesters.

Results/Evidence of Success

As described under the Graduate Counselor Component section above, all of OMSA's services contribute to student success and to a relatively high retention and graduation rate. However, OMSA also produces impact data on academic services each semester. Such data shows that when students consistently attend tutoring, they tend to perform better in the tutored course than do students with similar ACT scores and UIUC selection indices. (Such score and index similarities indicate that the attenders and non-attenders have similar levels of prior preparation.)

Examples from Spring Semester 2003 include:

Math 116		
	4 or more tutor sessions	3 or fewer tutor sessions
Mean Course Grade	3.143(N=7)	1.708(N=8)
Mean ACT Math score	19.714	19.750
Span 103		
	4 or more tutor sessions	3 or fewer tutor sessions
Mean Course Grade	3.039(N=17)	1.334(N=7)
Mean ACT Math Score	2.675	2.571

The difference in the course grades for Math 116 were statistically significant at $p = .000706$, while the difference in the ACT math scores for the two groups was not significant, at $p = 0.980473$.

The difference in the course grades for Span 103 were statistically significant at $p = 0.003247$, while the difference in the UIUC selection index for the two groups was not significant, at $p = 0.890796$.

Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRES)

Best Practice: Operational restructuring and the development of new administrative tools to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and capacity of text conversion services.

To be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, institutions of higher education are required to provide students with

disabilities with access to curricular content that is comparable in quality, accessibility, and timeliness to that afforded students without disabilities.

However, meeting these performance criteria in the emerging age of information is becoming increasingly more difficult as a result of several factors. First, the rapidity with which knowledge is generated is promoting the use of “just in time” course text identification practices, and it serves to appreciably shorten the longevity of course textbook use.

In terms of the former, the late identification of course reading materials frequently does not allow sufficient time for the conversion of the content to accessible formats prior to the beginning of class. As a result, students with disabilities must accept content incrementally according to its order in course syllabi rather than having immediate access to all content as is the case for students who do not have disabilities that impede the use of print. In terms of the diminishing “shelf life” of textbooks, in years past textbooks that were converted to accessible formats may have been used for several years; however, present-day course text materials that are converted to accessible formats are rarely used for more than a year or two, thus exacerbating the volume of materials needing to be converted. Indeed, the combination of “just in time” text identification and the diminishing longevity of course textbooks is contributing to a rising use of unique class-specific “course packs” comprised of a compilation of print-based materials from a multitude of sources. Obviously, these unique compilations exacerbate the frequency with which course materials must be transcribed to an accessible format.

To improve the timeliness with which students with disabilities receive course materials in alternative accessible formats, the Division implemented a two-pronged strategy.

First, a web-based text conversion management tool was created to enhance the efficiency with which personnel responsible for text conversion services could identify materials to be converted and execute the conversion process. The web-based text conversion management tool was designed so that it could be accessed from any computer connected to the Internet. It automatically reads class and/or section information from campus websites and it tracks assignments with regard to their due dates, for whom assignments are due, and in what formats they are to be converted. The tool also tracks text conversion output by student, class, book or assignment.

Second, text conversion services personnel were reorganized such that a single, full-time permanent employee was assigned responsibility for performing all electronic document scanning, thereby relegating student hourly personnel to the less technical assignment of document editing. In measuring the impact of these actions, in 2003-2004, the text conversion office produced 125,158 pages of converted text in 2,251 hours. In contrast, in 2002-03, the office produced 78,810 pages in 2,413 hours. As a result, the text conversion office required 7% fewer hours to produce nearly 59% more alternative format document output last year.

By virtue of this considerable improvement in efficiency, the backlog of course materials to be converted at the start of each term can now be eliminated in less than three weeks from the start of the term, compared to the eight weeks that it took to eliminate the backlog prior to the implementation of these changes.

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Undergraduate Admissions

During the past year, the University instituted several important changes in Undergraduate Admissions that will support our goal to increase the participation of underrepresented students at Western Illinois University. Undergraduate Admissions made great strides in addressing goals outlined in the university's Strategic Plan - *Higher Values in Higher Education*. The development of a single admissions portal and introduction of new admissions criteria met the strategic goal of "re-engineering the admissions process." Among the goals within the plan was a strong focus on the recruitment of students from underrepresented groups. Multicultural admission efforts improved in FY04, with 1,409 minority students visiting the campus, an 81.1% increase from the previous year. A Multicultural Recruitment Advisory Board was also created, consisting of Western students who assist Admissions with recruitment activities and programs and give presentations at their home high school during university breaks.

In addition to participating in 114 college day/night programs sponsored by the Illinois Association of College Admission Counselors (IACAC), counselors presented eight specialized programs for students of color, sponsored a program on the four-year public college perspective to juniors and their families, and hosted a financial aid presentation to high school students and their parents. In addition, Admissions staff participated in college fairs in Chicago and St. Louis that were sponsored by the National Association of College Admission Counselors (NACAC) and the Illinois State Beta Club. Also, during the past year, sponsored college days/nights in St. Louis increased 42% from a year ago.

During the past year, freshmen admission criteria were revised to eliminate class rank and to place more emphasis on grade point average and less on standardized test scores. The standards now require a minimum cumulative high school grade point average in combination with an ACT score. This new system improves access by utilizing a formula that is more equitable to students who perform well in high school and addresses the differences found among school districts throughout the state.

This past year also saw greater interaction of Macomb and Quad Cities Admissions staff through increased coordination of information dissemination and policy development. As Hispanic enrollment numbers continue to increase, these efforts in the Quad Cities will support the strategic plan goal to "create a student body of high achieving and diverse students."

Enrollment for fall term 2004 showed an increase of 7% in minority enrollment from fall term 2003. African American enrollment was up 6%, Hispanic up 12%, and Asian American enrollment up 4%. With the new initiatives in support of the university's strategic plan in place, it is anticipated that this trend will continue.