## **How Integrative Learning Practices Support Student Learning**

## **Impact of First Quarter Success on Student Retention and Completion**

Evidence, both nationally and at Clark College, shows that students who successfully complete their first quarter courses are more likely to be retained to the next quarter and complete a degree or certificate. Therefore, determining best practices to support students during their first quarter at Clark College can benefit student success throughout their academic experience (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Student Retention and Completion at Clark College by First Quarter Success Among First-Term, Degree-Seeking Students Starting Fall 2011.** *Excluding Running Start students.*

## **Integrative Learning Interventions Support First Quarter Success**

Integrative learning can be defined as integrating learning across courses, over time, and between curricular and co-curricular activities to enable students to be prepared to make informed judgments in the conduct of personal, professional and civic life (*Statement on Integrative Learning*, AAC&U, 2004). Some examples of integrative learning initiatives include learning communities, career and academic advising, service learning, and a First-Year Experience (FYE) course such as COLL 101 College Essentials: Introduction to Clark.

Integrative learning, as an intervention, can be used at any time during a student’s learning experience. However, integrating early on, such as during a student’s first quarter, can be closely linked to a student’s success. By engaging students from the beginning, they are more likely to be connected to the college, be retained, and complete their certificate or degree.

**Interventions to Support First Quarter Success at Clark College**

* **College Essentials (COLL 101).** 
  + Two-credit course providing an introduction to Clark College, student resources, college technology, and financial literacy. COLL 101 is an elective class designed for new students who intend to earn an associate degree.
  + Students who take the College Essentials course have:
    - Higher rates of successful completion of all first quarter courses (91% vs 81%; see Figure 2).
    - Higher rates of next quarter retention (83% vs. 73%; see Figure 3).
* **First-Quarter Learning Communities (FQLC).**
  + These communities, started in Fall 2014, help students build a successful foundation and support them in their first quarter and year at Clark. These communities primarily pair Math and English classes with the College Essentials course.
  + Additionally, within the First-Quarter Learning Communities (FQLC), students have high levels of agreement with the following statements:
    - I feel accepted and included as part of the Clark College community. (93%)
    - During my first quarter at Clark, I received the information and services I needed to be a successful student. (89%)

**Figure 2. Student Overall Course Success and Withdrawal Rate for All Fall 2014 Courses, Among First-Term, Degree-Seeking Students in Fall 2014 by College Essentials Course Success**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Student Course Success Rate for Non-Withdrawn Courses** | **Student withdrew from one or more courses during Fall term** (not including COLL 101) |
| **Did not take College Essentials Fall Term** | 81.0% | 3.8% |
| **Student enrolled in College Essentials Fall Term** | 83.1% | 2.7% |
| **Student successful in College Essentials Fall Term** | 90.5% | 1.9% |

**Figure 3. Next Quarter Retention Rates of First-Term, Degree-Seeking Students Starting Fall 2014, by College Essentials Enrollment** *Excluding Running Start Students*