

Jefferson State Community College – Birmingham, Alabama

Executive Summary – Methods for Mastering Math

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for Jefferson State Community College (JSCC) aims to increase the success of our developmental math students by providing an alternative that creates an opportunity to decrease the amount of time spent completing developmental course work and help struggling students who are most in need of supplemental instruction. Students who complete this program will be more likely to experience success both in mathematics course work and in completion of their academic careers.

If an incoming student begins their education in developmental coursework, this not only decreases their chances of success, but also lengthens the total time they spend in college. Institutional JSCC data shows approximately sixty percent of incoming developmental students place into developmental math. Of those who attempt developmental coursework, fifty percent experience a non-success (including withdrawals). This QEP is designed to target a significant population within the developmental students who are known as “cusp” or “marginal” students based on their COMPASS placement test score. The population will begin with a placement score within five points above or below the cut-off to qualify the student for this program. With proven success, this group will expand over time.

The traditional progression of developmental math courses leading to college level math at JSCC is: Math 090 (Basic Mathematics)→Math 098 (Elementary Algebra)→ Math 100 (Intermediate College Algebra). This QEP will create two 4 semester hour courses as an alternative to our traditional 3 semester hour math courses. A “marginal” student who is within five placement test points above or below the cut-off will be eligible for the alternative 4 credit hour course as outlined below:

- Students who score in the range of 31-40 on Section 2 of the COMPASS (cut-off of 36) would traditionally place into Math 090. They will now qualify for Math 098S.
- Students who score in the range of 29-38 on Section 3 of the COMPASS (cut-off of 34) would traditionally place into Math 100. They will now qualify for Math 100S.

The additional credit hour will allow for the inclusion of more material that is essential to the progression of math knowledge. This will benefit both developmental students in accelerating their time to college level math (098S), as well as college level math students who struggle to succeed their first semester (100S). Each “S” course will have its own set of student learning outcomes separate from the traditional counterpart course.

The goals of this QEP can be assessed at both the course level as well as throughout the academic career of students enrolled in this program.

- The students who participate in this program will achieve a higher success rate than their non-participatory counterparts.
- The creation of this program will help to strengthen the overall developmental math program as measured by success in college level math.
- At least 70% of the students who participate in this program will meet the student learning outcomes as outlined for that course.
- Students will be more likely to earn an associate’s degree if they enroll in this QEP program than students who do not.

All questions concerning this project can be directed to Amanda Kin, Associate Dean of Institutional Effectiveness. akin@jeffstateonline.com