



RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Report

## Santa Ana College Freshman Experience Program: Summary of Outcomes

February 2007

First-time freshmen entering Santa Ana College (SAC) are eligible to join a special program designed to increase student success. The Freshman Experience Program (FEP) is a learning community based on linked classes with a team of teachers and counselors who work together to create interrelationships among the paired classes. This team participates in their students' math and English classes, keeping abreast of their students' progress. Students receive a high level of attention from counselors and their other teachers, adding which helps the students feel involved and strive harder to reach their academic goals. The FEP first started at SAC during the Fall 1996 semester.

Students who participate in the FEP are typically young, full-time students, attend classes during the day, and have an educational goal of earning an AA/AS degree and/or transfer to the university after completing their work at SAC. The Fall 2005 FEP cohort included 451 students, of whom 401 (89%) were Latinos and 284 (or 63%) were female.

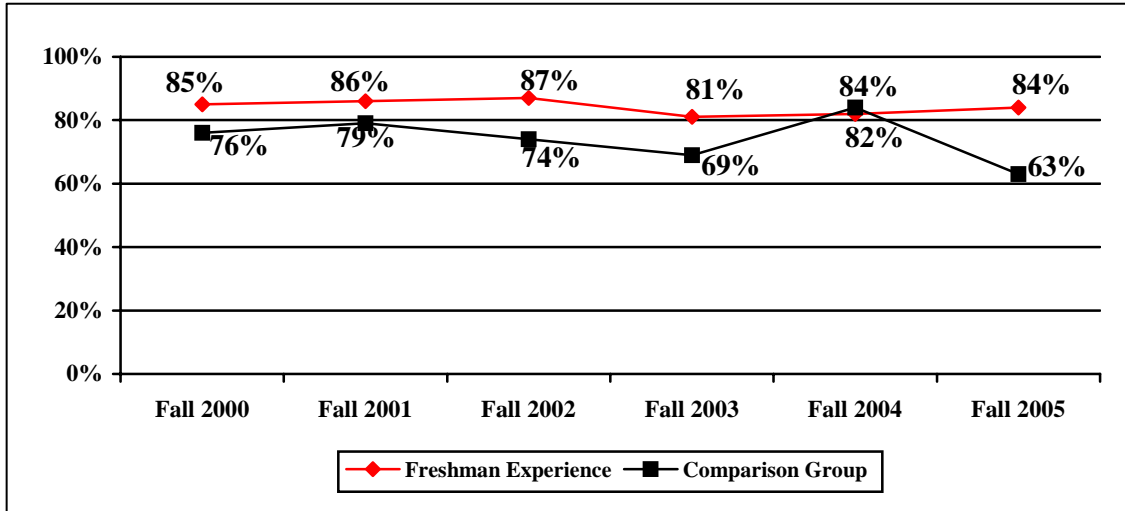
The RSCCD Research Department used a variety of strategies to look at the program participants and a comparison group (consisting of a population that was similar to the actual FEP students demographically in terms of ethnicity, age, day/night status, gender, full/part-time status and educational objective) who did not receive services/experiences of the FEP. Research shows impressive gains in persistence rates and course completion rates (A, B, C, and Credit) for FEP participants.

The following are some highlights of research findings for the FEP at SAC.

### **Persistence Rates:**

- FEP students typically persist at higher rates into subsequent semesters than those in the control groups.
- The differences in the persistence rates to a 2<sup>nd</sup> semester range from -2 percentage points (Fall 2004 cohort) to a high of +21 percentage points (Fall 2005 cohort).

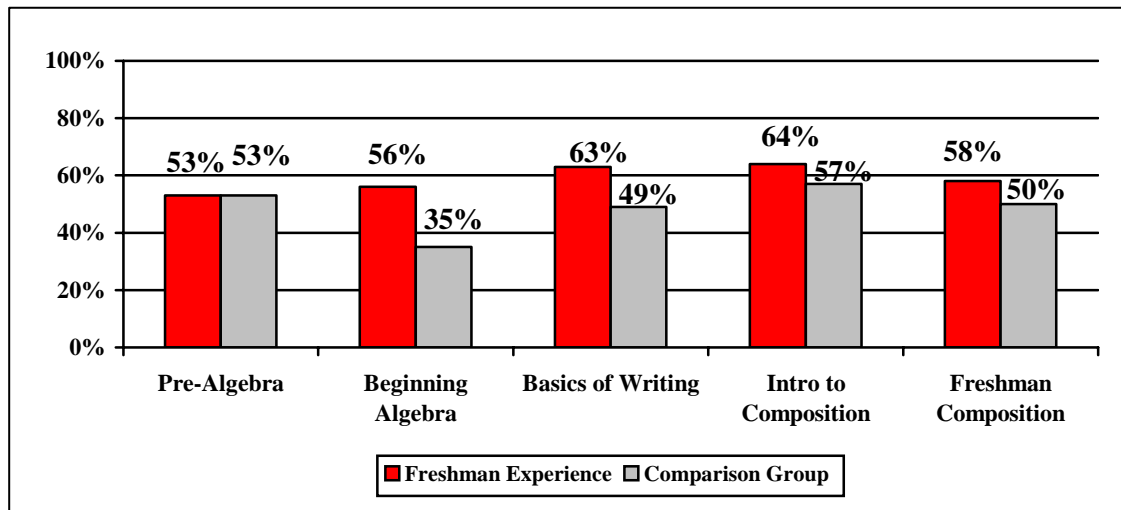
**Persistence to a 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester for FEP Cohort vs. Comparison Group  
Fall 2000 – Fall 2005**



**Pass Rates:**

- Math 060 (Beginning Algebra) has the widest disparity with the FEP group outperforming (using a pass/no pass criterion) the comparison group of similar students by 21% points.
- All English FEP students outperformed the comparison group with disparities ranging from 7% to 14% points.
- Math N48 (Pre-Algebra) was the only class that the FEP cohort did not outperform the comparison group but were equal with a 53% pass rate for Fall 2005.

**Pass Rates for the Fall 2005 FEP Cohort vs. Comparison Group**



**Progression Through Course Sequence:**

- The Fall 2005 FEP cohort successfully completed each of the combinations listed below within a one-year period at higher rates than the comparison group.
- The progression from Math 080 to one transferable math course had the widest disparity with the FEP students progressing at 20% points higher than the comparison group.
- 37% of FEP cohort successfully completed English N60 (Basics of Effective Writing) and English 061 (Introduction to Composition) within one year compared to the 18% of the comparison group.
- 35% of FEP cohort successfully completed English 061 (Introduction to Composition) and English 101 (Introduction to Freshman Composition) within one year compared to the 20% of the comparison group.
- 20% of FEP cohort successfully completed Math N48 (Pre-Algebra/Algebra Basics) and Math 060 (Elementary Algebra) within one year compared to the 18% of the comparison group.
- 18% of FEP cohort successfully completed Math 060 (Elementary Algebra) and Math 080 (Intermediate Algebra) within one year compared to the 12% of the comparison group.

**Progression Through Course Sequence  
Fall 2005 FEP Cohort vs. Comparison Group**

