Initial Results of Illinois' Shifting Gears Pilot Demonstration Evaluation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides initial results of Illinois' Shifting Gears Initiative that operated between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2009. This mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) evaluation sought to accomplish three goals: a) to assess program and student outcomes for two models (adult education and developmental education) for two target groups (6 – 8.9 grade level and 9 grade and above); b) to test three hypotheses regarding innovative program implementation; and c) to analyze the strength of evidence needed to support systemic and policy changes related to bridge program development and implementation.

Three of the pilot demonstration sites chose the Model A-Developmental Education approach that sought to move students from developmental education to college-level course work, and Model B-Adult Education approach that students sought to transition students from adult education and English literacy to postsecondary education, with all seeking to implement innovative instructional approaches. Major findings on bridge program implementation show:

- Illinois' bridge programs emphasized a range of instructional innovations, including contextualized instruction, team teaching, computerized support, hands-on and laboratory-based instruction, cohort-based learning communities, and other forms of active learning. Contextualized and applied instruction was the most pervasive of these approaches, but it was carried out in many different ways, with the most common strategy associated with basic skills (math, reading and writing), career development, and the integration of academic and career-technical education (CTE) knowledge and skills by using real-world problems and applications.

- College leadership and internal alignment of functional units and resources within community colleges were crucial to the development and implementation of bridge programs, particularly to bridge programs that sought to link adult education with community college developmental education and CTE.

- All three core elements of the bridge program definition adopted by Illinois' Shifting Gears 1.0 Initiative (i.e., contextualized instruction, support services including Transition Coordinators/Case Managers, and career development) were evident in the pilot demonstration bridge programs, especially student support services and Transition Coordinators/Case Managers. At least half of the pilot sites employed leadership teams dedicated to implementing bridge programs for low-skilled adults, including enhancing internal partnerships within the community colleges.

- With respect to Transition Coordinators/Case Managers, the data show higher rates of student use of Transition Coordinators/Case Managers related to higher rates of student completion when the following occurred:
    - Students receive career orientation more than once;
    - Students receive admissions and financial aid assistance at least once;
    - Students receive advising at least once;
    - Students receive transportation assistance at least once; and
    - Students meet more frequently with an assigned Transition Coordinator or Case Manager.

We found differences between Model One – Developmental Education and Model Two – Adult Education (AE) in that students enrolled in developmental bridge programs (Model One) accessed Transition Coordinators/Case Managers and various student services more than students enrolled in adult

bridge programs (Model Two). We attribute this difference to location and historic connections between developmental education and support services that are weak or nonexistent for adult bridge programs. Adult bridge programs are typically housed at community colleges but are still somewhat marginal to core mission and operations. However, over the course of the evaluation, we observed several cases where adult education units strengthened connections with developmental education, CTE and other community college units, bringing visibility and credibility to adult education.

Three models emerged through the SG 1.0 project that show promise and deserve further study:

- The English as Second Language (ESL) Model – Two community colleges customized curriculum and instruction to meet ESL students' needs, including paying special attention to linguistic, cultural, social, and gender issues.
- The Incumbent Worker Training Model – One community college drew upon an already close relationship between a health care program focused on contextualized instruction to transition students into a Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program. Pre-paid tuition was an important employee benefit supporting students' decisions to enroll in the bridge program and to continue enrollment in the LPN program.
- The Hybrid Model – A few community colleges blurred AE and developmental education. In particular, Lewis and Clark Community College developed a bridge program that engaged faculty from across all three functional areas (AE, developmental education, and CTE), and their shared experience convinced them (and us) that a comprehensive model that blends all three functional areas has potential to benefit students and enhance sustainability. Recognizing that students who need basic skills instruction come from many backgrounds and enter community colleges through many doors, this Hybrid Model offers advantages by helping students navigate the potentially complex and confusing environment of the community college and be successful.

Due to the limited length of time to evaluate outcomes achieved by bridge program participants (we had 15 months maximum from student entry to last follow-up), results show nearly half of all students completed bridge programs, with a higher rate of completion (72%) for students enrolled in developmental bridge programs than adult bridge programs. Nearly one-third of developmental bridge program students also continued and enrolled in postsecondary education as a result of the program, with about a quarter continuing in remedial instruction, and most of these students continued employment after completing the bridge program. By contrast, student outcomes associated with the adult bridge program showed lower rates of completion and postsecondary enrollment, but fairly similar results on employment. We suggest caution in interpreting these comparative results because students enrolled in the two models differed, with developmental bridge programs enrolling a more academically prepared student group than the adult bridge programs. It is also important to note that outcomes varied within Model Two – Adult Education, with some programs having results paralleling developmental bridge programs. More analysis is needed at the student level to determine the impact of bridge programming on student outcomes, and this analysis is planned for the SG 2.0 phase of the project.

Three types of barriers emerged across the 10 community colleges engaged in the pilot demonstration sites, and these barriers emerged regardless of whether the sites were implementing a bridge program associated with both models:

- Individual (student) barriers – Students lacked academic (college) preparation, including foundational academic skills and computer skills. They also had multiple personal, family, and employment challenges that got in the way of attending and succeeding in school. Further, recruitment was a problem in terms of attracting and identifying students who fit the identified student profile (Target audience A: 6-8.9 grade, or Target audience B: 9-12 grade) and meeting their needs.

- Organizational barriers – The community college presented multiple barriers, including the use of college placement exams that do not pinpoint students' competency gaps adequately; limited student support services to address the multifaceted barriers of low-skilled adults (see previous barrier); and limited administrative, curricular, and instructional structures to accommodate bridge program implementation.

- Policy barriers – The misalignment of systems, funding streams, and policy and program requirements associated with AE, WIA, Perkins IV CTE, and developmental education present a barrier to bridge program implementation. Included in this group of barriers is a concern about low-skilled adults' eligibility for WIA funding and issues with co-mingling monies across federal funding streams associated with AE, CTE, and WIA.

Despite these many barriers, changes in policy and practice were employed by the ten community college sites to support bridge programs offered to one to three low-skilled adult cohorts, with most sites offering the bridge program to at least two cohorts. Changes observed to policy and practice include:

- enhanced support services,
- better alignment of AE, developmental education and CTE,
- improved course approval procedures to facilitate fast paced program development and delivery, and
- enhanced communication and coordination between departments internal to community colleges and between local colleges and the state.

As part of the SG 1.0 pilot demonstration grants, many community colleges adopted new policies and procedures to facilitate bridge programs with changes to student admissions, tuition and fees, curriculum (course) approval, contextualized and applied instruction, support services, and internal alignment of federal funding streams. Alignment of funding was an especially important issue for the pilot sites implementing adult bridge programs because of concerns about co-mingling adult education and other federal funds.

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BACKGROUND

Since its inception, the Joyce Foundation's Shifting Gears (SG) Initiative has emphasized state level policy change that is intended to address the postsecondary education and employment needs of low-skilled adults. Joyce's website (see http://www.shifting-gears.org) observes that SG was launched initially to help five Midwest states — Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin — "re-engineer" adult education, workforce development and postsecondary education policies and "support economic growth and expand job opportunities for low-skilled adult workers in the Midwest." Funded since 2006, Illinois' SG initiative seeks to address state policy and local program disconnects that limit low-skilled adults' attainment of postsecondary credentials and employment in high demand occupations.

The first phase of Illinois' SG initiative (SG 1.0) was tied strategically to the state's Critical Skills Shortage Initiative (CSSI), targeting three industry sectors: healthcare; manufacturing; and transportation, distribution, and logistics. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) provided leadership for the grant, with support and matching funds from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). Adopting the pipeline metaphor, Illinois proposed two models for addressing leakage points in the pipeline that extends from K-12, adult and postsecondary education to employment. The first leakage point occurs when students struggle or fail to move from developmental education to college-level coursework, and the second is when students face challenges in transitioning from adult education and English literacy programs to postsecondary education.

EVALUATION GOALS

The intent of this evaluation report is to provide initial results of Illinois' SG pilot bridge programs that operated between July 1, 2007, and June 30, 2009, with most data collection occurring during the 2008 calendar year. All of the quantitative data reflect results on student participation and outcomes associated with bridge programs offered during the 2008 calendar year because of the state's commitment to provide The Joyce Foundation with results on student outcomes by the end of the grant on June 30, 2009.

As indicated in the Illinois proposal, the evaluation focused on assessing the effectiveness of SG 1.0 initiative in achieving the following four goals:

- Identifying opportunities to support bridge programming and identifying and removing impediments in current policies, structures, and practices;
- Implementing policies to support demonstrated best-practice instructional and delivery methods;
- Developing and pilot-testing a statewide data infrastructure that can support the planning, management, and evaluation of regional career pathway systems; and
- Optimizing current funding and identifying the need for new funding for bridge programs.

Specifically, the evaluation results reported herein focus on the pilot demonstration sites that were tasked with accomplishing the following objectives: a) To assess program and student outcomes for the two pilot demonstration models (Adult Education and Developmental Education) for two target groups (6 – 8.9 grade level and 9 grade and above); b) To test three hypotheses regarding innovative program implementation; and c) To analyze the strength of the evidence needed to support systemic and policy changes related to bridge program development and implementation.

EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODS

The evaluation design was mixed method, using qualitative and quantitative methods. The design stipulated the testing of at least one of the following hypotheses by each pilot demonstration site.

1. Hypothesis 1: A community college-CBO partnership will improve student transition outcomes if it is structured correctly and resources are equitably distributed.
2. Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches (e.g., providing adult or remedial education plus occupational instruction, delivering credit instruction with instructional support for remedial students, or developing industry survey courses) will improve student transition outcomes.
3. Hypothesis 3: E-learning and blended online learning will improve transition to postsecondary education in a cost-effective manner for working parents, incumbent workers, and others.

Table 1, Selected Pilot Demonstration Programs, describes the eight pilot demonstration projects, including the pilot demonstration model, sector, hypotheses tested, and target population. There are three Model One pilot demonstration sites and five Model Two pilot demonstration sites. All eight pilot programs tested Hypothesis Two: "Innovative instructional approaches (e.g., providing adult or remedial education plus occupational instruction, delivering credit instruction with instructional support for remedial students, or developing industry survey courses) will improve student transition outcomes." Only two of the eight projects proposed to test other hypotheses, either the one dealing with community-based organizations (CBO) or the E-learning/blended learning hypotheses. Three industry sectors were targeted for the pilot demonstration programs: manufacturing; healthcare; and transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL). As specified in their proposals, five pilot sites focused on target group A (9.0 and above grade level) and three focused on groups A and B, meaning they included 9.0 and above grade level learners as well as 6.0 – 8.9 grade learner levels. None of the pilot sites chose 6.0 – 8.9 grade level only.

Table 1. Selected Pilot Demonstration Programs				
Organization	**Model[1]**	**Sector**	**Hypotheses Tested[2]**	**Target Population[3]**
College of DuPage	One	Manufacturing	2, 3	A
College of Lake County	One	Manufacturing	2	A
Oakton Community College	One	Healthcare	1, 2	A, B
Black Hawk	Two	Transportation, Distribution, Logistics	2	A
John A Logan	Two	Healthcare	2	A
Lewis and Clark	Two	Manufacturing	2	A
McHenry	Two	Manufacturing	2	A, B
City Colleges – Olive Harvey, Malcolm X, and Wilbur Wright	Two	Healthcare	2	A, B

[1] *Models:*
One: Moving students from developmental (remedial) education to college-level coursework: Creating Pre-vocational Blended Remediation and Occupational Courses
Two: The transition from adult education and English literacy to postsecondary workforce education: Aligning Adult Education Program Content With Occupational Program Entry Criteria

[2] *Hypotheses:*
1. A community college-CBO partnership will improve student transition outcomes if it is structured correctly and resources are equitably distributed.
2. Innovative instructional approaches (e.g., providing adult or remedial education plus occupational instruction, delivering credit instruction with instructional support for remedial students, or developing industry survey courses) will improve student transition outcomes.
3. E-learning and blended online learning will improve transition to postsecondary education in a cost-effective manner for working parents, incumbent workers, and others.

[3] *Target populations:*
A. Those whose performance on standard placement test corresponds to 9th grade level or above.
B. Those whose performance on standard placement test corresponds to 6th through 8th grade level.

Qualitative Methods

The purpose of the qualitative component was to evaluate the implementation of the pilot demonstration programs and assess barriers to program development and student success. Results of the qualitative evaluation were intended to inform the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) as well as the Joyce Workgroup of extent to which the pilot demonstration programs were implemented as described as articulated in the proposals. The qualitative evaluation questions were:

1. What are the components of each bridge program (curriculum, instructional strategies, support services, etc.)?
2. How is each model structured to achieve the desired outcomes? What policies support and impede each model's success?
3. What core components are common and perceived to be effective and essential for program success and replication?
4. What is the relationship between implementation strategies and the program and student outcomes? What barriers impacted implementation and outcomes?

The qualitative data collection used multiple methods, including field visits, face-to-face and telephone interviews, document review, and logic modeling (copies of the logic model developed for each pilot demonstration site are available from OCCRL). One or more site visits were made to each of the pilot demonstration sites. When the evaluators visited the sites, data were collected through one-on-one and group interviews conducted with college administrators, faculty, support staff, institutional researchers, and students; SG pilot program directors, faculty, and transition coordinators; community-based organization (CBO) or employer partners; and other stakeholders.

In addition to field work, the evaluators collected evidence of implementation by reviewing documents produced by the pilot demonstration sites, including monthly and quarterly reports, curriculum, meeting notes, recruitment tools, and other project materials. Summary reports prepared by the project manager who visited the pilot demonstration sites on multiple occasions provided additional insights into program implementation. Periodic phone calls and e-mail communications were used by the evaluators to maintain contact with the program coordinators associated with the pilot demonstration sites.

Data were also collected by the evaluators through their role as participant-observers at each of the SG learning community meetings where program implementation, promising practices, barriers and challenges, and policy change were discussed. The evaluators also served as participant-observers of Illinois' Joyce Workgroup and cross-state meetings hosted by the Joyce Foundation where conversations routinely focused on state and local policy and program implementation within the state of Illinois and across the numerous Midwest states engaged in SG.

The analysis of data involved careful review and interpretation of the accumulated notes and documents. The initial step was to prepare a 12- to 15-page report for each pilot demonstration program and conduct member checking with local administrators and stakeholders (usually involving 1, 2 or more local reviewers) to insure the results presented in these reports were an accurate and credible reflection of the local programs. The majority of these reports were completed in fall 2008, though a few extended into winter/spring 2009 because of the extension of pilot demonstration programs by the Joyce Foundation through June 30, 2009. The qualitative reports were updated as program implementation proceeded, to reflect developments occurring at the local level.

Further, in the last few months of the project, the evaluators designed and administered an instrument that was completed by the pilot program coordinators and/or their designees regarding local implementation

of Illinois' bridge definition (copies available upon request). In addition, local personnel were asked to reflect on accomplishments, lessons learned and promising practices. These data, supplemented with telephone interviews, provided a rich source of information regarding the overall pilot demonstration project conducted by each site.

Finally, on June 12, 2009, OCCRL hosted a meeting of all of Illinois' pilot demonstration sites; the ICCB and other state agency personnel associated with SG 1.0, including the Joyce Workgroup and members of the steering committee; and the lead grant administrator of the SG 1.0 for the Joyce Foundation. The meeting allowed the evaluators to present the initial pilot demonstration program results (qualitative and quantitative), to engage the pilot sites in reviewing preliminary results, and to gather lessons learned from one or more representatives of the pilot demonstration sites who were invited to participate in a panel discussion. Comments by the pilot site representatives were recorded and used to triangulate with other results presented in this report.

Quantitative Methods

The purpose of the quantitative evaluation was to assess the outcomes of the pilot demonstration programs, especially their performance in improving student transition outcomes and in relating these results to differences among projects associated with each model. In particular, the quantitative evaluation attempted to measure the extent to which the pilot demonstration programs yielded superior results to traditional models for developmental education. The quantitative evaluation questions were:

1. What percent of students meet the academic skill standards needed to enter the occupational [or career-technical education (CTE)] program, compared to a baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
2. What percent of students enter a postsecondary occupational (or CTE) program in the selected program area?
3. What percent of students complete the occupational (or CTE) program compared to a baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
4. What percent of students earn the applicable certification or license for the occupational (or CTE) program compared to a baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
5. What is the average time required for students to complete remedial/developmental course work, compared to a baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
6. What percent of students obtain employment in the occupation compared to a baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?

It is noteworthy that, at the time of writing this evaluation proposal, the authors anticipated that some of the above measures may not be available for some pilot demonstration programs, depending on the duration of the program and other factors. Indeed, this concern became evident in the lack of outcomes data in some pilot demonstration sites. These pilot programs are identified in the Results section of this report.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

The qualitative results are presented according to the pilot demonstration sites associated with Model One, Developmental Education and Model Two, Adult Education. Each case identifies the occupational focus; hypotheses; goals; student recruitment; core components (identified by local administrators and evaluators); barriers and policy changes (identified by local administrators); and student enrollment, characteristics and outcomes. At the end of this section, three cross-case tables are provided to summarize results across all 10 community college bridge programs. This cross-case analysis provides a snapshot of cross-cutting results and unique results, revealing potential lessons for future bridge program implementation.

Model One: Developmental Bridge Programs

The Model One, Developmental Bridge Program pilot demonstration sites are:

- College of DuPage
- College of Lake County
- Oakton Community College

College of DuPage

Model: Developmental Bridge Program

Occupational Focus: Manufacturing

Hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches
- Hypothesis 3: E-learning and blended online learning

Target Audience: 9.0 and above grade level initially, but expanded to include 6.0 to 8.9 grade level (Two cohorts – Spring/summer 2008 and Spring/summer 2009)

Goals

The proposal from the College of DuPage (COD) observed a decline in individuals with adequate technical skills to obtain employment in the manufacturing industry, precipitating a decline in enrollments in COD's Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree programs in manufacturing over the past five years. To address this concern, COD proposed to build a bridge program for academically underprepared adults seeking to enter a career in manufacturing, calling its bridge program "Right Start." The proposal articulated a primary goal of preparing adult students who tested into remedial education in reading, writing or math for high-skilled, high-demand jobs in manufacturing. The program was envisioned to prepare students for the AAS degree program in Manufacturing Technology as well as entry-level employment.

Student Recruitment

COD's manufacturing bridge program was targeted at students who did not pass the college's placement test in reading, writing and math, and who wanted to enter an occupation in the manufacturing sector. COD had difficulties recruiting students who met the target developmental education levels (as measured by COMPASS scores), with one COD administrator observing it was "hard to get students who qualify in all areas, as we defined them." COD was granted flexibility by the ICCB to modify the student eligibility criteria from its original proposal to allow admittance to students who tested at the developmental level in one or more of three developmental tests (math, reading, or writing). Referencing the varied level of student competencies that COD administrators were seeing in applicants, one administrator observed that the inclusion of students with a wider range of abilities "…has helped students be more like peer tutors…. [They] pair up with someone with complimentary skills." Ultimately, 12 students began the pilot bridge program.

Core Components

Innovative Instruction – Right Start was initially planned as a 20-week, 10-semester credit hour course and approved by the COD Division Curriculum Committee and College Wide Curriculum Committee prior to the start of the program in spring 2008. However, before the start of the first course, the program was modified to run for 15 weeks only, with a start date of March 13 and end date of July 21, 2008. This change was made to better align the program with the existing college calendar and faculty schedules and to enhance student recruitment, which proved to be more challenging than COD personnel had anticipated, as stated above.

The bridge program curriculum incorporated three developmental areas (reading, writing, and math) that were integrated with the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) curriculum that certifies students for entry-level positions in the manufacturing sector. Math was linked to concepts that the students were learning in the MSSC program, and similar integration took place in reading and writing.

Full-time faculty associated with the program worked together to develop the curriculum, and they often team-taught to further contextualize academics within the MSSC curriculum. For example, the reading and math instructors collaborated to help students navigate math word problems. The MSSC text was supplemented with academics so that students could practice reading, writing, and reflecting techniques. A number of COD administrators praised the Right Start faculty for their effective teaching techniques saying, "[The] faculty were able to see the whole picture. It wasn't, 'I'm the math guy, and I'm going to work at the math.'" This collaborative instructional approach enhanced the curriculum, making it relevant to the students' interests.

E-learning and Blended Online Learning – The inclusion of the online MSSC modules was perceived by students as beneficial. When asked what the most important part of the program was for the students, a few cited the MSSC modules. In addition to providing a contextual component to the curriculum, the MSSC modules provided several students an opportunity to enhance their basic computer skills. One faculty member referenced the wide age range of students in the bridge program, acknowledging the lack of computer skills by older students.

Career Development – A number of career development components were integrated into the bridge program to prepare students for employment and increase their awareness of career possibilities. For example, the students participated in a job fair at Bison Gear and Engineering, a major partner to COD's pilot demonstration program. In anticipation of this event, a representative from the COD Career Services Center attended a class to assist students to develop a resume and cover letter and engage in successful interviewing techniques. The faculty altered the course schedule a few weeks prior to the job fair to

prepare students to attend. A Right Start instructor emphasized the integration of career development throughout the curriculum, saying, "[We] have had students work through the MSSC modules and résumés during the science times." The job fair and Career Services Center presentation, along with an exercise allowing students to research manufacturing companies, were built into the regular bridge course schedule rather than requiring students take their personal time outside of class.

Transition Coordinator and Support Services – Most support services were provided by existing COD structures and arranged primarily by a Transition Coordinator or faculty member involved in the Right Start program. Described as playing a critical "mothering" role, the Right Start Transition Coordinator was the initial contact and referral point for students for the duration of the bridge program. The Transition Coordinator was recognized by COD administrators and Right Start students as a vital part of the program. She monitored student attendance and contacted students if they were absent, and she assisted those who had problems of any kind, including personal challenges. Additionally, the Transition Coordinator collaborated with the five Right Start faculty to track student progress and implement strategies to support student success. Examples of these strategies include conducting one-on-one appointments with students, rescheduling exams and labs, and arranging meetings with students' case workers. A COD administrator with primary responsibility for the Right Start program praised the Transition Coordinator, saying "Our [Transition Coordinator] was wonderful… She kind of dedicated herself to the lives of these students [so] that those who wanted to be successful could be successful. Personnel are key here. They really are."

Barriers and Policy Change

Recruiting students who met the admission criteria was challenging for COD administrators because the college found substantial numbers of applicants who fell below or above the 9th grade level, but few who fell within the relatively narrow target population window. For example, only 75 of 12,207 incoming COD students whose first term occurred in FY 2006 fell within the COMPASS score parameters outlined in the proposal. As a consequence, the Right Start program sought approval from the ICCB to relax its program entrance criteria to allow students who fell below the initial criteria to be admitted, and this approval was given.

COD also noted that a common reason for students being unable to register was the positioning of the course during the regular academic year (beginning in March) and during the day (1-4 pm). To address this issue, COD sought to change the course start and end dates to allow for more high school students to participate, and they observed that changing the hours of instruction would allow incumbent workers who might want to take a class in the evening to maintain a full-time day job.

At the time of the evaluators' initial site visit in April 2008, the pilot bridge course was not identified at either developmental or college level. But after being offered as an "experimental course," administrators planned to apply to have the bridge course accepted as a "regular course" in the COD curriculum. The fact that the 10-hour class was offered a number of times provided a compelling argument for approval by the college (a course approval application could be finalized after offering a course three times). By connecting the 10-credit hour college-level course to an occupational (or CTE) program, the college could provide a regular funding stream to sustain the program, foreshadowing the ICCB's new policy to blend developmental education and CTE to support bridge programs for low-skilled adults.

The 10-credit hour/14-contact hour class was split among the three faculty for compensation purposes. Since every faculty member received two or three load-hours for teaching the bridge classes, the remuneration was commensurate to time on task. A class with a small number of contact hours would not have afforded this option, therefore the college would have had to pay a total number of hours to the

faculty in excess of the contract hours. As implemented, the COD pilot demonstration project seemed to have created a sustainable model for adult bridge programs.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 2 shows that 12 students participated in one cohort offered by COD in Spring 2008. Since data collection ended December 31, 2008, data are not available for the Spring 2009 cohort. The vast majority of students was male (83%) and minority (67%). Half of the students were over 25 years of age, 100% had a family income over $21,000, and 45% had earned postsecondary credits prior to enrolling in the bridge program. One student (8.3%) had a high school diploma or GED only, and two students (17%) were limited English proficient. Two-thirds (67%) of the students completed the 15-week bridge program, and two students (17%) continued to some form of postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program. One-third of the students (33%) were placed in employment as a result of the program and 17% continued in employment held prior to their participation in the program, resulting in 50% of the bridge students being placed as a result of the program or continuing employment.

Table 2. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	12
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	17%
• Percent Minority	67%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	50%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	9%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	45%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	0%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	100%
• Percent with Limited English Proficiency	17%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	67%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	67%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	17%
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	0%
• Percent of all pilot students	0%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	33%
• Percent continued in employment	17%
• Percent placed or continued	50%
Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.	

Summary

The COD pilot demonstration program struggled to recruit students that fit the original target population, but eventually recruited and enrolled 12 students in a manufacturing bridge program that ran for 15 weeks and awarded the 8 students who completed a total of 10 credits. Most of the students who enrolled were relatively unfamiliar with manufacturing, but they sought the opportunity to participate in the bridge program because of the employment opportunities that promised to generate a family-sustaining wage. The curriculum was integrated, contextualized, and team-taught by a core group of full-time instructors of English, math, science, and manufacturing, which created a bridge program aligned with the MSSC curriculum. E-learning was integrated into the curriculum as an academic support strategy, and students attributed positive benefits to using it. Career development was a deliberate component of the curriculum, creating opportunities for students to learn about manufacturing employers in the district and providing a way for manufacturing firms to contribute in concrete ways to the educational experiences of students through career fairs, tours, guest speakers, and information meetings. Policy issues focused primarily on internal institutional matters, including course approval and faculty compensation. Both of these policy areas appeared to be addressed by COD in ways that support current and future program implementation. With respect to outcomes, two-thirds of the students completed the bridge program. However, few continued their education at COD within the six months following the bridge program. During this same period, one-half of the students were placed into employment (33%) or continued in their current employment (17%).

College of Lake County

Model: Developmental Bridge Program

Occupational Focus: Manufacturing

Hypothesis:

- Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches

Target Audience: 9.0 and above grade level (Two cohorts – Summer/fall 2008 and Spring/summer 2009)

Goals

The bridge program developed by the College of Lake County (CLC) sought to determine whether contextualized teaching and learning strategies including innovative instructional approaches employed in basic skills instruction and career-pathways programming made a difference for the target population of students testing at the 9th grade or above level. Specifically, this pilot demonstration program examined whether instructional strategies improved the target population's ability to enter and succeed in postsecondary education leading to career-path employment and increased wages, with the ultimate goal of economic self-sufficiency. This bridge program also investigated whether the removal of identified barriers, such as students' unfamiliarity with the college environment and its processes, produced correspondingly large improvements in student transition.

Student Recruitment

CLC established an initial goal of recruiting 22 students to participate who were 18 years of age and older with reading levels of 9th grade or above, limited English proficiency, GED recipients, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or other government assistance recipients (current or past).

Various recruiting methods were used, such as the creation of a color flyer; sending emails to all adult basic education (ABE), GED, and ESL course instructors in CLC's district; and meeting with the counseling staff to inform them about the SG project. The college also held information sessions. Many students indicated they became interested in the program through a one-page advertisement placed in the local *Advertiser*, a newspaper delivered free to area residents. Several students who were retained to completion said they found out about the bridge program through communication with the program coordinator. Of 28 applicants, 12 met the criteria and were invited to participate.

Core Components

Instructional Innovation – CLC offered a 24-week bridge curriculum that addressed manufacturing industry standards by creating a pre-vocational program including academic remediation, foundational occupational (or CTE) content, and interpersonal skills required to enter the manufacturing field as a Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) technician. The curriculum addressed the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) project to enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for NIMS credentialing. The full-time faculty who were affiliated with the program integrated adult education, math, and science into the manufacturing context. Math and English were integrated into the manufacturing curriculum using contextualized approaches, "My Math Lab," and supplementary math assignments. Adjustments were made to the "My Math Lab" modules to insure they were supporting and reinforcing the manufacturing portion of the curriculum. In addition to math, a reading specialist was recruited to aid in contextualizing competencies for language proficiency.

Students who had no knowledge or experience related to manufacturing spoke of the importance of hands-on learning. One student observed, "I have no knowledge about manufacturing, so it sounds like a foreign language to me. I can understand what he [the instructor] is talking about [in the lab]." One of the most powerful benefits of the small size of the class was the time students spent in the lab working with the CNC machines under the tutelage of their instructor. The students interacted with their manufacturing instructor in the CNC 115 Programming class. Whenever they had difficulties, they asked questions of the instructor, and the instructor gave hints or asked further questions to encourage the students to think deeply about the problem. The instructor observed that he tries "to make a safe atmosphere to let them [the students] speak up. Also, I try to challenge them and keep them thinking." Most students mentioned that the instructor's challenges were very helpful to their learning, with one student offering, "[The instructor] challenges a lot. He keeps us thinking. I like that very much."

The CNC faculty member used web-enhanced courses and integrated web-based simulations of the machines. In particular, the use of "clicker" technology through a Classroom Performance System (CPS) was beneficial to the students' learning processes. The students reported getting immediate feedback, which facilitated their learning. Career development was another formal aspect of the curriculum, and it is described below.

Career Development – The curriculum included a 1-college credit hour course in Cooperative Work Experience that required students to attend seminars for job searching and interviewing. These seminars are designed to introduce students to skills related to job searches and job applications. The students also learned about interviewing skills, resume writing, and Internet job searching. Because the CLC faculty was concerned about students' current and future employment, the students learned how to negotiate salary with employers. Every student was required to attend this seminar to fulfill the bridge program requirement, and the faculty worked closely with the students to assist them to complete the resumes and job applications, and carry out job searches. The program coordinator observed that transition to college and employment is a long-term goal for many students, and CLC sees its role as allowing students to expand their horizons by continuing their education. He added, "We're trying to motivate [the students], trying to open their eyes, and [trying to] show them what possibilities are there."

Transition Coordinator and Student Services – The lead instructor at CLC who taught the CNC course also acted as the Transition Coordinator during the fall 2008 offering of the bridge program. Serving in dual roles, the instructor developed a very close relationship with the students because he was the point person on their academic experiences as well as their personal challenges. Because of the demands on the instructor to engage students inside and outside of the classroom, CLC decided to separate the Transition Coordinator role from the lead instructor's role when the program was offered in spring 2009. During the spring, a trained case manager was hired, and this arrangement was perceived to be an important improvement to the bridge program. In addition to instructional advising and career placement services, students received assistance to enhance their attendance, such as transportation. SG grant funds were used to pay students' tuition, fees, and books, helping to resolve financial challenges. The identification of student needs was obtained by surveying the students using a locally developed "Barriers Survey" that was administered during orientation sessions. This survey identified factors that could impede student learning, helping staff to identify support services that the students may need to access to be successful in the program. The survey results showed that financial issues were the most serious barrier, with transportation and library access on weekends and after 10 pm being another concern of some students.

Barriers and Policy Change

Difficulty finding local business support for internships or apprenticeships for the adult students was identified as a barrier by the bridge program coordinator and CLC administrators, and this concern was exacerbated in 2009 when the economy slid into a recession. The program coordinator hoped to use advisory committee members as mentors to give students advice and help them progress in the program and in future employment, but this aspect of the program had not solidified at the time of this evaluation.

The struggle in recruiting students was attributed with poor perceptions of the manufacturing industry, requiring that the bridge program coordinator strategize about how to market the program more fully, including offering informational meetings to inform prospective students about the program. The program staff planned to schedule employers to come to campus to offer informational meetings with potential students. Difficulty finding qualified faculty was another recruitment challenge. Few faculty possess the professional credentials to teach NIMS curriculum, and, even when faculty have these credentials, many lack experience teaching low-skilled adults. CLC administrators planned to address the instructional challenges of the faculty by requiring all instructors to be NIMS credentialed prior to teaching classes in the bridge program.

Further, CLC personnel found the ACCUPLACER placement exam did not diagnose students' academic weaknesses carefully enough, making development of the contextualized math and English curriculum difficult. Designed as a placement test rather than a diagnostic test, CLC personnel were seeking additional information about developing education placement testing and hoping to make adjustments to assess adult learners' competencies. These changes were not solidified at the time of the site visit, however.

Finally, CLC was challenged at providing adequate student services (especially counseling and advising) for the target population. Although the faculty did their best to support the students, issues that the students brought to the program were very complicated, and often beyond the professional training of the bridge instructor. To address this concern, the college hired a professional case manager to work with students who enrolled in the spring 2009 semester.

A local policy issue that arose at CLC was the college's current policy regarding course withdrawal. Because of the adult students' numerous and complicated personal issues, attendance was sometimes a problem. According to CLC policy, students absent over consecutive days are automatically withdrawn

from the program. Thus, although some students wanted to return to the program again, they could not. To address this concern, a more flexible attendance policy was needed.

A second policy issue involved the current ICCB course approval process that is based on seat time and number of credits of instruction per week, and not competency based. The manufacturing faculty determined this approach was not workable for nontraditional adult students who have jobs, are a (single) mother or father, are full-time employees, or are commuter students. To overcome this obstacle, the bridge coordinator prepared a curriculum waiver that was granted by the ICCB.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 3 shows results for the 12 students who participated in one cohort that extended from July through December 2008. Because data collection ended December 31, 2008, data are not available for the Spring 2009 cohort. The vast majority of students was male (92%), and one-half was minority. Half of the students were over 25 years of age, and one student (8%) was limited English proficient. None of the students had earned postsecondary credits prior to enrolling in the bridge program, and, in fact, 40% of the students had no high school diploma or GED. One-third (33%) of the students completed the 24-week bridge program, and one student (8%) continued to some form of postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program. None of the students were placed in employment as a result of the program, but 58% continued in employment.

Table 3. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	12
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	8%
• Percent Minority	50%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	50%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	40%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	0%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	NA
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	NA
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	8%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	33%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	33%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	8%
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	0%
• Percent of all pilot students	0%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	0%
• Percent continued in employment	58%
• Percent placed or continued	58%
Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges. Enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.	

Summary

CLC offered a 24-week bridge program in manufacturing focused on NIMS certification, preparing students for initial certification in CNC operations. The curriculum was contextualized, especially in the areas of manufacturing and mathematics, where lessons were learned about the misalignment of college math requirements and the manufacturing curriculum, and the inability of the ACCUPLACER college placement exam to diagnose students' remedial needs. Instructor-led, laboratory (hands-on), and web-based instruction were integrated into the curriculum, along with a substantial focus on career development through a 1-credit our cooperative work experience course to help students develop an awareness of and appreciation for manufacturing careers. Student services were necessary to support the students, though limited options existed for the first cohort offered in summer/fall 2008, which led to the hiring of a case manager for the second cohort offered spring/summer 2009. Similar to other community colleges that identified manufacturing, recruitment was a challenge for CLC's bridge program. Of the

relatively small pool of individuals (22) who responded to advertisements about the program, 12 enrolled in the first bridge program in summer/fall 2008. Of these 12, several students departed within the initial few weeks, citing personal and family reasons. Eventually, one-third of the students completed. Conclusions should not be drawn about outcomes related to continued enrollment at CLC and placement in employment based on these data. This is because the data request required reporting on students through December 2008, providing almost no time to follow students beyond completion of their courses and determine whether they had continued enrollment at the postsecondary level or obtained or changed employment in the manufacturing field.

Oakton Community College

Model: Developmental Bridge Program

Occupational Focus: Healthcare

Hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: Community college/Community-based partnership
- Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches

Target Audience: 9.0 and above grade level (One cohort – Spring 2008)

Goals

Oakton Community College (OCC) and Presbyterian Homes (PH) proposed to address two of SG 1.0 hypotheses by developing a "CNA to LPN Bridge to Success" program designed for incumbent frontline healthcare workers in the long-term care setting. One objective in the original proposal was to develop a community college partnership to improve student transition outcomes, indicating the program would be successful if structured correctly and resources distributed equitably. A second objective was to offer innovative instructional approaches to improve student transition outcomes.

Student Recruitment

OCC's pilot is unique among all SG 1.0 pilot demonstration sites because the target population was restricted to employees of Presbyterian Homes (PH), a Chicago and suburban long-term care organization. PH initiated the cooperation of OCC's Nursing Department to deliver training necessary to prepare some incumbent CNAs to enter an LPN program at OCC. Interested PH employees were required to be full-time employees, and their experience on the job ranged from new employees to those with 10 years of experience. PH did not want to selectively recruit employees based on academic standards, so interested employees were not tested as part of the selection process. In spite of considerable advertisement about the program within the PH community, OCC's program coordinators reported that there was poor attendance at the first information sessions and lack of follow-up by many employees who had indicated they were interested. Program coordinators indicated they had to consistently inform, remind, and encourage many of the employee/students about deadlines and other issues dealing with navigating the college system throughout the recruitment and enrollment process and then again as the students transitioned to the LPN prerequisite courses. Despite OCC's intention to target students at the 9.0 and above grade level, the program coordinators estimated the range of academic readiness of the group was "very large," extending from 6th grade to college level. A few students had taken at least one LPN

prerequisite science course but had not passed it. Most students were single mothers of dependent children, and program coordinators believed most students were first generation college students with little to no familiarity with college. Both PH and OCC officials described the students as compassionate people with "a calling to care for others" and "people they would want to have taking care of their own parents."

Core Components

Community/Employer Partnership – The bridge course was a second attempt by OCC and PH to prepare PH employees (CNAs) for the LPN program. The first attempt was modeled after the college's High Risk Nursing Student Program (HRNSP), involving an 8-week intensive review of verbal, math, science, and medical terminology content for 20 applicants who desired to enter OCC's nursing program but whose scores fell below the cutoff. The college did not have an active LPN program at the time they were approached by PH, but they did have ICCB approval to reinstate a prior program so the effort to develop the bridge program required minimal time. The college's willingness to divert resources and services to address PH's workforce needs was indicative of a sincere effort to partner. This accomplishment followed on the heels of a prior attempt between OCC and PH that had not been especially successful. In the earlier effort, PH did not understand the extent of its employees' academic needs, believing OCC's nursing faculty could remediate employee skills in an 8-week term. Attributed to not understanding the rigor of the program, some PH administrators did not understand why their employees struggled with the curriculum. PH administrators believed part of the problem was that employee performance in CNA jobs did not reveal academic competencies, therefore the entry-level competence of the students was not understood. Another lesson learned was the importance of PH and OCC leaders giving consistent and accurate information and advice to students. To accomplish this, the partners increased communication between themselves, and with students, to answer questions related to their education and employment.

Instructional Innovation – The bridge curriculum was co-designed by OCC's nursing program coordinator and a carefully selected bridge instructor of developmental English and certified in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). She described the learning process as a "character process," saying her "deepest love is to inspire people who don't know their capacity to grow." The instructor used a variety of resources to contextualize medical vocabulary and health related concepts so that the students would be exposed to their first pre-requisite courses, including content from the National League for Nursing (NLN) exam which all students have to take for entrance into the LPN program. Further, the instructor chose specific readings and assignments related to healthcare or to issues that pertain to diverse student populations, mostly women. Students worked in groups and were required to present reflective summaries of their reading and experiences in healthcare. They had several opportunities to engage in public speaking that the students described as "not easy;" however, with persistent instructor encouragement, the students grew more confident in their ability. The students were provided access to computers in a cottage-turned-classroom at the job site and in the classroom at the nearby OCC satellite campus, and were given introductory lessons in computer literacy, as most did not have basic knowledge or access to computers in their homes. In fact, the plan to offer some instruction via computer-based modules was abandoned when the instructor learned that the students lacked computer literacy. The curriculum was described as a "work in progress – a continuous discovery of what works and what does not."

Transition Coordinators and Support Services – Direct provision of support services was primarily conducted by two employees at OCC who were assisted by the Director of Nursing Education at PH. One coordinator was a nursing instructor and the other an OCC admissions counselor. The Nursing Director served as a go-between for the students and their PH supervisors, helping to maintain a sense of a learning community among the students in the work environment, to avoid conflicts between work schedules and

class schedules, and to arrange site-based tutoring by some PH employees, a concept cited as "way out of the box." OCC's Transition Coordinators shared roles and provided students with college- and occupation-related knowledge. The two coordinators explained their role as "coaches" and "problem solvers," spending hours following up on details, determining students' needs, offering encouragement, and "just listening." The coordinators were also responsible for dropping off and picking up the college's technological equipment lent to the PH site-based classroom. Distributing the comprehensive role of providing student support among three persons, each of whom brought a unique skill set but shared a genuine commitment to student/employee success, appeared to address the diverse needs of this unique employee/student population.

Employee Financial Assistance – PH pre-paid the tuition of their employees/students in the bridge program instead of reimbursing them after successful course completion, in recognition that most of their employees (who were employed as CNAs) would not be able to pay tuition. In addition to employer-sponsored tuition assistance, some PH residents established a scholarship fund to cover some expenses for the bridge participants.

Barriers and Policy Change

From the students' perspective, balancing work and school was challenging. The students did not receive paid time off to attend the bridge class, and although some students used vacation time, others worked weekends to make up for lost hours and pay. Overtime work adds to students' stress and complicates time management, but most students seemed to be able to juggle the additional responsibilities.

The college administrators and instructors observed that OCC's cohort consisted of students whose academic preparation and competence ranged widely (although no college placement test was given to confirm this observation). Due to the wide variation in ability, the program's pace was slowed down to allow students with more limited academic skills to keep up. One consequence of this decision was that the pace of instruction did not accommodate students who could progress at a faster rate. A few students described the pace of instruction as "frustrating;" however, the program coordinators believed that most students who complained did not demonstrate classroom performance that matched their claims. That is, the vast majority of students were thought to need the slower pace to reach an acceptable academic competency level to complete the bridge program prepared to enter and successfully complete the prerequisite sciences courses so they could then enter the LPN program.

The lack of computer literacy and access to computers outside the educational setting was another barrier cited by program coordinators. To help remedy this, computers were placed in the cottage on the PH campus that had been set up as a classroom. Additionally, the instructor added a computer component, and they reported that all students obtained basic knowledge such as using email, navigating the Internet and creating word documents.

College capacity was a barrier to offering future CNA- to-LPN bridge programs. In fact, during the period when the pilot demonstration program was implemented one other local provider of long-term care expressed interest in replicating the bridge program; however, the nursing program could not accommodate expansion. This decision was determined partially by the requisite need to hire additional qualified nursing instructors, a profession in short supply nationwide, and the potential difficulty in finding additional clinical sites for instruction.

An OCC administrator indicated that the ICCB's developmental education reimbursement structure did not take into account the actual costs of offering bridge programs, endorsing the state's adoption of new policy for developmental bridge programs to make them more economically feasible and serve as an incentive to offer more bridge courses.

College administrators cited several local policy changes that were made to accommodate this bridge program:

- The college allowed bridge students to enroll and commence with the bridge course before receiving tuition payment from the employer-partner.
- The college charged PH in-district tuition ($84.00/credit hour) for all students, regardless of their residency because the main campus of the employer was in Evanston, within the OCC district boundaries.
- The college allowed two advisors to focus solely on this small group of students, meaning the advisor-student ratio was far lower than the typical advisor load.
- The college allowed the HRNSP course length to be doubled to accommodate the needed content and the students' full-time work schedules.
- The college allowed courses to be scheduled off the main campus at two sites, one at and the other near the student/employee workplace.
- The college allowed the admissions criteria to be waived for the bridge class.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 4 shows 19 students participated in the one and only cohort offered by OCC. The majority of students was female, over 25 years of age, had a family income over $21,000, and had earned postsecondary credits prior to enrolling in the bridge program. A slight majority was White. All students possessed either a high school diploma or GED, and all 19 (100%) completed the bridge program. Slightly over half of the bridge students continued in some form of postsecondary credit instruction at OCC, with almost one-third of the continuing students participating in additional remedial education. Since this pilot program was restricted to incumbent workers at PH, it is logical that most, if not all, would continue employment. This finding was evident in the data in that 100% of the PH employees/OCC students continued their employment.

Table 4. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	19
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	95%
• Percent Minority	47%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	11%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	0%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	63%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	0%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	83%
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	5%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	100%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	100%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	53%
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	30%
• Percent of all pilot students	16%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	0%
• Percent continued in employment	100%
• Percent placed or continued	100%
Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), based on student-level data submitted by the SG pilot colleges on enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions for January 1 – December 31, 2008. These data also reflect corrected summary values from a review of the initial data by SG pilot site officials.	

Summary

Building on a prior attempt to establish a training program with PH, OCC was able to strengthen its partnership with PH during the bridge program, improve communication, and enhance coordination. Both organizations demonstrated a sincere effort to improve the bridge program for the employees/students they shared. Innovative instruction was evidenced by an experienced adjunct faculty member who had taught in a variety of settings (K-12, adult basic education, developmental education, ESL). Other aspects of the innovative instruction included a lengthened bridge course to accommodate students' learning needs and the offering of instruction at sites convenient to students' workplaces. These factors, along with students' prior experience with postsecondary education (many students participated in an earlier OCC-PH bridge program) as well as the financial incentive offered through the PH employee benefits package, contributed to OCC's bridge program having a 100% bridge course student completion rate. OCC's

highly committed transition coordinators and improved communication between OCC and PH were other factors identified as contributing to the success of this healthcare bridge program.

Model Two: Adult Bridge Programs

Black Hawk College

Model: Adult Bridge Program (ESL & GED)

Occupational Foci: Transportation-Distribution-Logistics (TDL)

Hypothesis:

- Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches

Target Audience: 9.0 and above grade level (Two concurrent cohorts in spring 2008 – one ESL, one GED)

Goals

The BHC proposal specified two goals. The first was that contextualized adult GED and ESL course content would academically prepare adult education students to transition to the postsecondary Warehouse and Distribution Specialist (WDS) certificate program, and second, that comprehensive supports including tutoring, learning communities, targeted use of instructional software, career counseling, and personal case management would enhance postsecondary success.

Student Recruitment

BHC created two concurrent bridge cohorts, one for ESL and the other for GED students, age 18 and over, to prepare them to enter the WDS certificate program. The initiative targeted individuals who were unemployed and/or under-employed and interested in occupations within the transportation, distribution and logistics career cluster. BHC recruitment strategies included a brochure distributed widely in the community and personal visits to students enrolled in GED and ESL classes, and personal outreach to CBOs, churches, service clubs and other organizations. According to the case manager, recruitment extended to "everyplace we could think of because we thought this was a great opportunity." Student selection was determined from interested GED students whose academic skill levels corresponded to the 9.0 and above grade level on the TABE and to ESL students at Level 5 "high intermediate or advanced" on the CELSA. Total program enrollment during the 2008 calendar year was 25 students.

Core Components

Leadership – Part of the impetus to apply to be a SG pilot demonstration site stemmed from BHC's strategic plans to expand the student base to include a relatively large population of adult education students. The timing of the SG 1.0 initiative was fortuitous because it provided stimulus and support during a time when the college was experiencing a strained institutional budget. During the 16-week bridge course and the certificate program to which the students transitioned, the Associate Dean explained, "BHC had to shift gears many times to adjust policies and practices to support the students enrolled." Examples include creating a 6-week ESL course to help students retain their new knowledge during the summer break between the end of the spring bridge course and the start of the fall WDS certificate courses. Further, BHC offered an unplanned, additional section of the WDS certificate program

to accommodate some bridge students' work schedules, accelerating the WDS curriculum into two different models, and measuring student outcomes to help determine the most optimal timeframe.

Innovative Instruction – Beginning with an outline of core concepts and vocabulary developed by a consultant external to the college and the Bridge Program Manual developed by Women Employed, the ESL and GED bridge courses were further developed by two experienced ESL and GED instructors who each taught their respective bridge students. The ESL instructor developed a broad spectrum of learning activities and contextualized ESL reading, writing, and math curriculum that had applicability to not only the WDS program but also the larger Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL) industry cluster curriculum. To prepare, she read WDS course texts to determine the academic level required and common vocabulary. She accelerated the delivery of the normal 16-week, Level 5 ESL course to include additional parts of speech and verb tenses students would need to know to understand WDS texts. She emphasized that she "recycles and repeats" the material to aid retention because, "My students don't go home and study; they go home to sleep so they can get up and go to work and then straight back here for class." She also added contextualized math vocabulary and practice problems because, "Many ESL students understand mathematics principles, but they don't understand the words in the math problem." A holistic approach to learning was used to help the adult learner to succeed. She explained, "Some students come late; others leave early, depending on their work shifts. They come when they are tired, and sick, and hungry. In the back of the room I always have hot coffee and an assortment of snacks. The students appreciate it."

Alignment – From the beginning of the SG initiative**,** BHC Adult Education administrators designed their approach to bridge program within the larger career pathway concept and understood its utility for transitioning students from one credential to another as their needs and aspirations evolve. In determining the industry sector to develop the bridge program, the Associate Dean of Adult Education examined the academic level of potential bridge students, the academic requirements of potential BHC certificate and associate degree programs, and the workforce needs of the region. The WDS certificate program was chosen because "Our primary concern was creating an opportunity where, in the semester-long timeframe of the bridge course, students could learn the amount of academic and technical content necessary to 'bridge the learning gap' and be prepared to enter the chosen program." At the same time BHC applied for SG 1.0, the college had applied to the ICCB to offer an Inventory Specialist Certificate and an Associate in Science Degree in Supply Chain Management, to which the WDS certificate was aligned. The college has since received approval for both programs. Further, the associate degree in Supply Chain Management is articulated with a baccalaureate degree program in Supply Chain Management at Western Illinois University.

Transition Coordinator and Support Services – Support services were provided by a part-time case manager, specifically recruited for the SG 1.0 initiative and whose diverse 20-year work experience and dedication to similar populations of students demonstrated the expertise needed to serve the bridge students' diverse needs. In addition to recruiting students for the bridge courses, she supported them throughout their bridge and WDS certificate program by coaching and encouraging, providing academic and financial aid advisement, and assisting in finding resources for child care and transportation assistance. Prior to the start of the WDS courses, she developed and provided an orientation session for the WDS program instructors, providing them with a class list including brief biographical sketches of each student, an important service because she "recognized that the WDS program's instructors had not taught a class with this level of diversity." In addition, she offered four Orientation/Transition workshops for the WDS students designed to bond the previously separate cohorts (GED and ESL); complete course registration materials; secure parking tags; and introduce students to the college campus, resources, services, and policies. As students neared the end of the WDS program, she coached them with interview practice and resume preparation and assumed an additional role of employer outreach to help students make contacts. The college re-titled her role from Case Manager to Shifting Gears Advisor, believing that

potential employers would better respond to fact the students were "advised" rather than "case managed" which often carries a negative connotation. Her role was cited as "the most critical element to the program's success" by a BHC program administrator.

Continuous Improvement – Due to student demand, the college offered two cohorts of the WDS certificate program offered in two formats: One met four days per week over thirteen weeks, and the other met two days per week over twenty-five weeks. The program length for both cohorts was accelerated from the standard, 36-week WDS program. The college is tracking them and identifying multiple measures of student and program outcomes. It is also tracking sub-populations of students to determine program components and other variables that are associated with student outcomes. In addition, the college plans to track each graduate's transition into the workplace.

Barriers and Policy Change

As the bridge students approached the start of the planned WDS certificate courses, several reported they had work schedule conflicts that would prevent them from attending evening classes. The evening schedule had been determined based on the availability of course instructors who worked during the day. Persistent lobbying by the ESL students resulted in the addition of a day-time section of the WDS program. BHC staff, with the assistance of the college's Dean of Instruction and Student Learning, found the resources, faculty, and facilities to accommodate the additional section which allowed more students (not SG students) to enter the WDS program. Creation of the day-time courses created another challenge, however. The evening students and faculty did not have access to the same amount and level of services available to participants in the day-time program. To accommodate, the case manager extended her role to bring the services to the evening students (e.g. picking up books while the bookstore is open and delivering them to the students and providing assistance with registration and billing issues).

Hiring the Shifting Gears Advisor presented a challenge for BHC because the person who was best qualified to serve in that role already worked for BHC as an adjunct faculty member. There was concern that the cumulative appointment would require that she work 40 hours per week, which was considered full-time. This issue was resolved after some manipulation of her hours and duties.

Finally, BHC administrators stated that the low computer literacy skills of SG bridge students created difficulty with on-line registration; however, the Shifting Gears Advisor was able to intervene and help students to register for the bridge program.

With respect to policies, BHC administrators strictly adhered to the population they targeted to serve in the GED class cohort, including 9th grade reading level and above. The college chose this level because it predicted the students could be prepared to pass the GED exam and transfer to the WDS program without needing to also enroll in remedial courses. Many students whose scores fell below this level were denied participation in the bridge program. Admission of ESL students followed a slightly different course, raising an issue about a potential disparity in the admissions policy for different student populations. With respect to ESL, BHC administrators allowed students in the ESL group to enter the program at a lower competency level than the GED group, observing that ESL students are "highly motivated and seek extra help." This decision was affirmed when ESL students whose TABE scores were below the 9th grade level showed large strides toward the cut off goal. Whether GED students who were denied admission would have showed similar gains is unknown because the students were unable to participate.

BHC administrators cited TANF rules that need to be altered to support more bridge programs. Work requirements make it very difficult for people to make time to go to school when lack of transportation and affordable child care are considered. In addition to these needs are issues related to student support services, such as financial aid for students enrolled in short-term training programs. The administrators

indicated an intent to investigate the WIA 40% training policy and initiate discussions with the federal Perkins (CTE) administrator at the college to pursue additional sources of funds to support bridge programs in other industry sectors.

Several local policy issues arose related to curriculum alignment between adult education and ESL courses and vocational and college credit programs. The adult education department did not align the bridge curriculum with the developmental education division of BHC but it did work on alignment with the vocational credit WDS certificate program. BHC administrators explained that typically, the main GED program goal is to help students pass the GED tests, leaving students unprepared for transition to postsecondary courses. BHC works with the academic ESL faculty to prepare Level 5 ESL students to transition to academic ESL. However, many of the students' goals are to transition to non-credit or credit CTE classes without having to take academic ESL classes.

Recognizing the need to serve low-skilled learners, there is active discussion at BHC about creating a Transition Coordinator position for adult education students with institutional funds. This institutional decision is attributed to the SG pilot demonstration project and increased awareness within the BHC community of the need to transition more adult education students into vocational and college credit programs.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 5 shows that 25 students participated in the spring 2008 cohort. A second cohort was offered in spring 2009 but data were not collected on this group, in compliance with the quantitative evaluation design. The majority of students was male, minority, limited English proficient, over 25 years of age, without a high school diploma or GED, and without any postsecondary credits. Slightly over half of the students were reported to have an annual family income of $21,000 or higher. Of the total of 25 students, 80% completed the bridge program and 100% entered some form of postsecondary credit instruction, with 28% of the students enrolling in remedial education. None of the students were placed into employment, but 80% continued their employment.

Table 5. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	25
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	24%
• Percent Minority	96%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	14%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	60%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	28%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	4%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	52%
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	80%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	84%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	84%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	100%
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	28%
• Percent of all pilot students	28%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	0%
• Percent continued in employment	80%
• Percent placed or continued	80%
Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), based on student-level data submitted by the SG pilot colleges on enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions for January 1 – December 31, 2008. These data also reflect corrected summary values from a review of the initial data by SG pilot site officials.	

Summary

There is the evidence that BHC made advances toward its short-term goals of implementing innovative instructional approaches and making policy change. The ESL instructor developed a comprehensive bridge curriculum assembled from a variety of resources and aligned it with the entry level knowledge of the related certificate program. The ESL instructor continued to improve the course throughout the semester based on her ongoing collection of data and the students' needs. The college intends to use the curriculum model to expand the bridge concept to other industry sectors and has asked the ESL instructor to lead that initiative.

BHC bridge administrators regularly identified current and potential barriers to the bridge program at the local and state levels. BHC was able to offer a second, unplanned certificate program to accommodate working schedules of some of the bridge students in spite of the college's tight budget. Other barriers related to the lack of services available to students who are on campus at night were overcome by the transition counselor's intervention and assistance. College policies including hiring practices of part-time personnel (transition counselor), alignment of adult education curriculum to occupational and developmental courses and programs, bridge student selection criteria, and better coordination with external financial support systems (WIA, TANFF) were also addressed during the course of the SG bridge initiative. While not all identified barriers and policies were overcome or changed, several areas saw progress and received heightened awareness due to the implementation of SG.

City Colleges of Chicago

Model: Adult Bridge Program

Occupational Focus: Healthcare

Hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: Community-based partnerships
- Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches

Target Audience: 6.0 to 8.9 grade level and 9.0 and above grade level

Goals

The proposal for the three City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) specified a three-pronged approach: faculty development and training, curriculum alignment across campuses, and the provision of substantial student support services to adult education enrollees. Among the policy changes to be addressed were changes to funding mechanisms for adult education and pre-college credit programs in order to allow students to prepare to enter credit and career courses without remediation, and an assessment of the extent to which special student services including transition coordinators could meet a major need and provide an effective tool to support transition for low-skilled adults.

Pilot Demonstration Programs

The pilot demonstration projects associated with the CCC are presented below, including a presentation of each bridge program's student recruitment, core components, and student enrollment, characteristics and outcomes. The three CCC colleges are:

- Olive Harvey College (OHC)
- Malcolm X College (MXC)
- Wilbur Wright College (WWC)

Barriers and Policy Changes

A number of challenges influenced program implementation, including personnel-related problems. Difficulties with hiring and turnover of Transition Coordinators occurred at all the CCC colleges. When

the Transition Coordinator positions were not filled, Deans and Assistant Deans filled in, but they were not familiar with some of the services that the students need. Despite delay and difficulties filling the positions, OHC and MXC indicated a commitment to continuing a part-time transition counselor to serve their adult bridge students, recognizing that this role is crucial to students' persistence and eventual success. The district also reported difficulties identifying adult educators with the knowledge of the healthcare industry to teach the bridge program. The district addressed the barrier by providing multiple professional development opportunities for the adult educators, including some mentoring by healthcare occupations staff.

Whether there is a person designated to coordinate and assist the students with support services or not, the students experienced numerous challenges, including inadequate funds to pay for child care, housing, healthcare, exam fees, background checks required for healthcare occupations (and others), and transportation. SG funds were used to coordinate and subsidize some of these services, especially transportation in the form of bus passes.

Another barrier to student and program success stemmed from the decision to place students in the SG bridge using TABE reading scores alone, because an insufficient number of students qualified in both reading and math to hold a class. All colleges experienced this barrier and all adjusted by lowering the math entrance level, making adjustments to the curriculum to help remedy the disparity in entrance scores. MXC targeted the highest level of students; setting a 9th grade minimum in math and reading, but lowered the math score to 7th grade, indicating a lower score would not contribute to the students' success. WWC and OHC targeted students at the 6.0 – 8.9th grade level, although administrators at each site stated they admitted students who fell a grade level below, typically in math.

Moreover, the students' likely inability to raise their grade level in a semester timeframe presented a barrier to students' success and to their receiving funding with WIA Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). A related barrier is the historical philosophy held by WIA coordinators about adult education students. As liaisons to the WIA providers, WIA coordinators understand that students "need to show some initiative" to be considered for WIA funds, and adult education administrators held conversations with the WIA providers to inform them that bridge program completion is an important outcome of having students receiving WIA funds to stay in school.

Space was a problem at one college (WWC), resulting in the first cohort being offered on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. Adult education administrators at that college mentioned that adult education's needs are considered to be lower on the college's priority list in terms of space allocation to the credit bearing postsecondary programs at the college. At the same college, students did not have access to any computer labs until the midpoint of the course. Interestingly, the President of this college has offered Presidential Scholarships to successful healthcare bridge completers. The other two colleges did not report this barrier.

All colleges reported that many of the SG bridge students lack minimum competency with computer technology, which "slows down the learning process." Most students do not have access to computers outside the school setting. Although students had ready access to computers at two of the colleges, one college reported that their computers were often not in good working condition. The lack of preparation in computer literacy and the lack of access to working computers add to the already steep learning curve that faces these adults.

Another barrier is related to student attendance. While all colleges reported there was spotty attendance in the bridge courses, they stated there was typically a core of students whose attendance was consistent. To encourage more students to attend regularly, program administrators offered bus passes as a reward for attendance. At OHC, the administrator asked students to sign a commitment letter, stating their intention

to complete two semesters of the bridge course which would hopefully prepare them to be ready to take the GED exam.

With respect to policy, a district level steering committee identified a number of policy-related concerns that have impacted implementation of CCC's bridge programs. The most significant was finding financial assistance for students who want to continue their education, including those enrolled in short-term programs. Some students' motivation seemed to be lessened when they could not be assured the next level of training would be available to them at no cost or at an affordable cost. The colleges could not provide that assurance, hampering CCC's ability to determine if the bridge program was sustainable. One way the colleges began to address this issue was by reaching out to WIA providers to establish WIA ITAs for students who qualify, but some students were not eligible. Concerns about limited funding and whether the students would find employment diminished WIA providers' support for the program.

Finally, at the end of 2008, CCC administrators reported they had been able to leverage SG dollars to create an infrastructure to support more bridge programs, utilizing contextualized instruction. Two colleges, OHC and MXC, reported they plan to support a full-time, permanent Transition Coordinator, indicating the colleges' appreciation for the important role this position has student success.

Olive Harvey College

Cohorts: Three cohorts (Spring, Summer and Fall 2008), and one cohort in spring 2009.

Student Recruitment

Most of the bridge recruitment methods used by Olive Harvey College (OHC) focused internally. Primary recruitment methods include distributing flyers, referrals from the WIA coordinator and from student services, following up with students based on healthcare survey results and those reporting an interest in CNA at Adult Education registration. OHC also makes intentional efforts to target prospective students who do not meet the academic requirements for the Basic Certificate courses in healthcare. Adult education administrators stated that the most successful recruitment strategy has been speaking to students enrolled in GED/ABE classes.

Core Components

Leadership – Although the college experienced turnover in administrators during the course of the SG bridge, the dedication of the Assistant Dean of Adult Education, the Director of the South Chicago Learning Center, and the OHC President were consistent, strong supporters of the program and its students. The college was not able to hire a transition counselor during the first three cohorts of students, but the Assistant Dean served as a coach, speaking to each student to request that they sign a contract to stay in the SG bridge for at least two semesters, incenting those who would commit with scholarships to cover the cost of CPR and First Aid classes, and; coordinating services within the college's occupational departments and support services to assist students' access to information and assistance, such as providing bus passes and establishing a meal program. She was later joined by another adult educator at the college, not a part of the SG initiative, but willing to help with recruiting and providing assistance to support the SG students. The President was involved in support of the initiative, serving on the state level Shifting Gears Steering Committee attended the Joyce Foundation cross-site meeting as part of the Illinois team, and spoke at the final Learning Community meeting of all SG pilot sites. Finally, the college was able to hire an experienced transition counselor who intends to remain in the position, as OHC has indicated that it intends to sustain the bridge program.

Internal Partnership – Throughout the implementation of the bridge program, OHC has increasingly relied on partners within the college. Key partners identified include the faculty and or staff from student services, continuing education, healthcare career credit programs, and the WIA coordinator. The scope of participation from each partner varied. The college is beginning to seek external partners as it moves forward with the assistance of the transition counselor.

Innovative Instruction – Curriculum and instruction at OHC improved over the course of the SG bridge. One key component to the curriculum at OHC is an online career planning tool developed specifically for SG called "Critical Choices" which includes career exploration activities, interest inventories, and watching videos of persons who are in the chosen career speaking about that career. SG students lack technology skills, such as basic keyboarding and knowledge of Microsoft Word. Consequently, these technology components were incorporated into the reading and math curriculum to provide students with necessary skills. Separate sections of math taught by an additional adult educator were added to the curriculum when the students' math needs were determined. The adult educators, administrators and the transition counselor have attended professional development programs in order to infuse more contextualized material and methodologies into the bridge curriculum.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 6 shows the total number of students who participated in the three bridge cohorts was 61. The majority of students was minority and female; just over half were less than 25 years of age. Just over two-thirds had a family income of less than $3,000, and less than one-tenth had a family income of over $21,000. About one-third of the students had limited English Language proficiency. The vast majority had not earned a high school diploma or GED and only two percent had earned any postsecondary credits and. The college reported that twelve percent successfully completed the bridge program, but the college did not report enrollment in remedial college credit, other postsecondary credit, or placement in employment. However, the May 2009 monthly report revealed that seven bridge students were enrolled in a summer 2009 CNA Basic Certificate course (no GED required).

Table 6. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	61
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	85%
• Percent Minority	97%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	57%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	95%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	2%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	68%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	8%
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	30%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	12%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	12%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	N/A
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	N/A
• Percent of all pilot students	0%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	N/A
• Percent continued in employment	N/A
• Percent placed or continued	N/A
Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), based on student-level data submitted by the SG pilot colleges on enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions for January1 to December 31, 2008. These data also reflect corrected summary values from a review of the initial data by SG pilot site officials.	

Summary

OHC was the last to be added to the SG initiative, taking over for one that ceased to offer adult education. As a result, it had a late start which it has worked hard to make up. There is some evidence that the college is making advances toward most of its proposed goals. Although the adult educator was not at first familiar with contextualized instruction, she, along with administrators and the transition counselor have participated in several professional development opportunities. The college also added an additional math instructor to address the students' lower-than-anticipated math skills. The curriculum is being

improved with each cohort of students, as the bridge coordinators infuse more material they are exposed to through professional development. Because the college accepted students at the low and intermediate levels, alignment to the Basic Certificate level courses has been the focus. However, curriculum needs to be further developed and aligned with the larger pathway concept that includes alignment with college-credit courses and programs.

There is some evidence of partnering within the college in providing students with curricular and support services; the program coordinator reports that the bridge has become well-integrated within the college. With the President's support, this can be expected to continue.

The college also addressed barriers as they were faced in implementing this program. It combined grant monies to be able to assist the students when, due to a budget software-caused delay, they did not have access to SG dollars. They enlisted the help of an adult educator to assist in recruitment, a barrier cited at the beginning of the bridge, and later developed incentive programs to reward attendance by issuing bus passes for continuous attendance. The Assistant Dean stepped outside her role as an administrator to personally and consistently assess the students' and program's needs, supplying students with encouragement and support that was noted as "exemplary" by a district administrator.

Malcolm X College

Cohorts: Three Cohorts (Spring, Summer and Fall 2008), and one cohort in Spring 2009

Student Recruitment

MXC distributes an occupational interest survey to all students enrolling in their adult education courses. Advisors mentioned the option of the healthcare bridge to all adult education students whose TABE reading level was 9.0 and above and who indicated an interest in a healthcare occupation as their career goal. A recruitment flyer with a letter announcing class start date and audience was sent to over 20 community entities and as a part of a mass mailing to 3,700 residents in the MXC district. Information was presented at the adult education orientation sessions and at a DCFS youth conference to parents, foster parents, and caseworkers. In Fall 2008, MXC also recruited within the Career Prep and GED courses at the main campus and the West Side Learning Center. MXC administrators note that their continuous conversations with admissions staff, college advisors and health science instructors have resulted in an ample supply of students interested in the healthcare bridge. MXC at first targeted students who scored between 9.0 and 12.0 in reading and math on the TABE, but they lowered the math score to 7.0 to admit more students. Once the college had hired a transition counselor, meeting with her was also required for admission to the bridge.

Core Components

Internal Partnership – According to a district level adult education administrator, the implementation of SG increased communication among the seven CCC and among divisions within MXC. Adult education administrators at MXC held early discussions with the director of the Surgical Technology program for advice on what terminology to include in the GED course, how to structure quizzes, and how to order healthcare related instructional supplies. This collaboration has continued; she meets with the Adult Educator each week to provide her with professional development on how to contextualize more activities and content. Also, the SG students tour the healthcare laboratories and classrooms located on the third floor of the college – providing insight into credit based classroom instruction and an environment that GED students would not otherwise be exposed to. Another outcome of collaboration is the relationship

formed with the tutoring staff in the Student Services unit of the college, one of whom served as an interim transition coach and tutor. Also, through greater collaboration, the WIA provider scheduled an on-site orientation for all SG bridge and adult education students, which has resulted in administration and the instructor reporting they better understand the WIA process. According to one administrator, prior to the SG bridge course, the adult education division "had not done a good job of working with the WIA coordinator on campus." In the Final Report from MXC to the SG coordinator, internal partnerships with the "Career, Allied Health and Continuing Education programs, have been critical to the success" of the bridge program, and as external partnerships with prospective employers and service learning sites are added, they will be "critical to program's ongoing success" as well.

Innovative Instruction – the curriculum and instruction at MXC improved over the course of the SG bridge. Before the first SG healthcare bridge cohort, a healthcare occupational program instructor received three hours release time to review the tentative course outline and student learning outcomes based on contextualized GED/Healthcare curriculum and develop the course schedule. The arrival of the district's curriculum did not allow much time for the instructor to review it before starting the bridge course, her first experience at MXC and at teaching this high a level of GED students. The instructor's syllabus indicates each class is sectioned into four parts: reading, writing, math and healthcare. Reading and math assignments include academic exercises that apply to healthcare settings. The students requiring computer support services schedule those with the bi-lingual tutor in the Student Support Services unit of the Adult Education program. Students also have access to an additional workshop, developed in conjunction with Women Employed, to conduct career exploration, goal setting, and decision-making. In the spring 2009 semester, the Director of the Surgical Tech program created healthcare related activities that correlate with the GED curriculum and visited the class along with some other healthcare instructors to talk about health-related topics. During the site visit held spring 2008, students expressed interest in having more outside speakers; finding willing healthcare occupations teachers was cited as a barrier in early reports – obviously one that the college was able to overcome.

At the time of the site visit during the first cohort, the healthcare bridge instructor stated that she "mostly uses lecture teaching methods" and doesn't assign "a lot of group work [because the students are] too hard to control." She said she prefers multiple choice and matching items on her midterm exams and focuses on the students "writing the five paragraph essay. I make them write down to the bottom of the page." On the day of the site visit, before either of the district professional development activities took place, there was limited evidence of contextualized instruction taking place in the classroom. Even so, students had high praise for this instructor, saying the class "is more interesting than other GED courses we've taken," and "the instructor shows she cares" about them as people. Since that time, the instructor has attended several professional development sessions on contextual and problem-based learning. The SG adult education administrator stated that there has been definite improvement in the instructor's ability to teach the class.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 7 shows the total number of students who participated in the three bridge cohorts was 50. The majority of students was minority and female; just over half were less than 25 years of age. Almost two-thirds had a family income of less than $3,000, and almost one-fifth had a family income of over $21,000. About one-fourth of the students had limited English Language proficiency. Less than one-tenth had earned postsecondary credits and the vast majority had not earned a high school diploma or GED. The college reported that one-fifth successfully completed the bridge program, but the college did not report enrollment in remedial college credit, other postsecondary credit, or placement in employment. However, the May 2009 monthly report revealed that seven bridge students had received scholarships to enroll in Basic Certificate level (no GED required) CNA courses and eight bridge students had passed the GED, with verification of their accomplishment on record.

Table 7. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	50
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	68%
• Percent Minority	98%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	57%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	91%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	7%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	62%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	18%
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	24%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	20%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	20%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	N/A
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	N/A
• Percent of all pilot students	0%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	N/A
• Percent continued in employment	N/A
• Percent placed or continued	N/A
Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), based on student-level data submitted by the SG pilot colleges on enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions for January 1 – December 31, 2008. These data also reflect corrected summary values from a review of the initial data by SG pilot site officials.	

Summary

There is evidence that the college is making advances toward its proposed goal of providing innovative instruction. Although the college had a slow start, with the help of internal partners in occupational programs and the willingness of the instructor to attend training and adopt new teaching methodologies, improvement was noted by the adult education administrators. The curriculum needs to be further developed and aligned with the larger pathway concept and the many college-credit-level healthcare occupational programs at MXC, which on its Web site is referenced as the "beacon college of health sciences education."

There is also evidence that MXC has adopted some local policies that will help the adult education students interested in transitioning to education beyond GED attainment. The college has signage above its Adult Education area, calling it "The Bridge Center," to reflect its goal to transition adult education students to college level courses. They have recruited a college level advisor to assist adult education students with learning more about the college and its course offerings. MXC has also intentionally involved its internal partners to organize and improve students' access to college resources, such as tutoring and the WIA coordinator. The college reports that it intends to continue to have a transition counselor for bridge students because it recognizes the critical role it plays in student retention.

Wilbur Wright College

Cohorts: --Two cohorts in Summer and Fall 2008, with two additional cohorts in spring 2009

Student Recruitment

Wilbur Wright College (WWC) targeted students who scored between 6.0-8.9 in reading on the TABE. Recruitment efforts included flyers sent to the 18 area sites where adult education classes are offered. Also, before fall the Dean attended outreach events at two high schools and at a church which held a job fair. WWC considers their most effective strategy was making presentations to the students enrolled in ABE classes. Of the students who expressed interest, approximately 30 met the minimum TABE reading score. All students who participated in the Healthcare Bridge met the minimum for reading requirement, but many were much lower in math skills.

Core Components

Internal Partnership – WWC identified five divisions with which they developed "linkage agreements" to enhance the curriculum and support services for the SG bridge program and its students: Career Planning and Job Placement, Financial Aid, WIA, Student Academic Support Services (tutoring) and Allied Health. Although all Adult Education students can seek assistance in most of these units, the SG bridge implementation brought the units' staff and faculty to the students in the SG classroom to facilitate students' access to the information and services. This effort addressed both the perceived and real barriers that often exist for adult students in regard to awareness of and access to services that can help their persistence and success in college. The Assistant Dean explained that as a result of the increased collaboration, those outside Adult Education have also increased their knowledge of adult education, stating they are "more aware of the role Adult Education plays in student transition."

Innovative Instruction – The SG bridge initiative was the first time WWC had offered a bridge program on its main campus. WWC formed a curriculum committee that looked at the curriculum resources provided by the CCC district and supplemented it according to their target population's learning needs.

The pace of the evolution of the curriculum and instruction at WWC was affected by lack of familiarity with contextualized curriculum, instructor turnover, and initially, instructional space. The adult educator first selected to teach the bridge was experienced with instructional strategies aimed at lower reading level students and was provided further professional development in contextualized curriculum, but she moved on to another position before the class began. Administrators hired another instructor for the 2008 summer semester who was instructing ESL courses and who later returned to that assignment. Another instructor was hired for fall 2008, but left the college before the term was over. The college strongly encouraged an experienced ESL instructor to take the class for the remaining weeks in the semester; she divided her 20 hour per week appointment evenly between serving as the instructor and as the transition coach, until the college was able to hire someone for that position. College administrators explained that this temporary instructor was a "special person" who was finally able to fill this critical role in addition to her teaching responsibility.

The first bridge course was offered Friday evenings and Saturday mornings for total of 8 hours of instruction per week, the least amount of class time of all CCC bridge initiatives. The course was co-taught by an adult educator and an instructor from "credit healthcare classes" who taught two days per week; on opposite days, a math instructor taught the class. Attendance was poor, so in fall 2008, administrators increased the intensity and duration of the second bridge course offering it four mornings per week, four hours a day which equaled the amount of instruction at the two other CCC sites. A second instructor was engaged to teach social studies and math. The contextualized math component was added when the students' math competency was determined to be much lower than their reading competency level. The college also added the computer-based AZTEC software in the fall so that students could improve their computer literacy while at the same time have access to math, healthcare and reading related tutorials from any computer inside or outside the college.

A fifth, optional morning session, called Allied Health which covers medical terminology and communication, was added in the spring of 2009. The Assistant Dean, reflecting on the SG Bridge and its evolution over its relatively short-term existence remarked, "The fact that we've been able to work with the Allied Health Dean has made a big difference. The students have been certified in CPR; that's something tangible that added reality to their dream . . . they're doing Red Cross certification in First Aid. So, not only are they working toward their GED, but it gives them something they can hold in their hand."

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 8 shows the total number of students who participated in the two bridge cohorts was 39. Most students were minority and female; just under half were less than 25 years of age. About one-third had a family income of less than $3,000, and almost one-fourth had a family income of over $21,000. About half the students had limited English Language proficiency. As this was an ABE bridge, almost none had earned postsecondary credits and the vast majority had not earned a high school diploma or GED. The college reported that just over half completed the bridge but the college did not report enrollment in remedial college credit or in other postsecondary credit. The college reported no students were placed in or continued in employment.

Table 8. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	39
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	69%
• Percent Minority	87%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	43%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	94%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	3%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	31%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	23%
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	51%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	52%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	52%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	N/A
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	N/A
• Percent of all pilot students	0%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	0%
• Percent continued in employment	0%
• Percent placed or continued	0%
Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), based on student-level data submitted by the SG pilot colleges on enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions for January 1 – December 31, 2008. These data also reflect corrected summary values from a review of the initial data by SG pilot site officials.	

Summary

There is evidence that the college is making advances toward two of the four short-term goals the CCC proposal identified for the SG bridge initiative. The college has increased the intensity and duration of the bridge course to improve student outcomes and invited occupational instructors to add healthcare-related topics to the ABE curriculum. It has also intentionally involved its internal partners to organize and improve students' access to college resources. These efforts are initial steps toward better preparing ABE students to earn a Basic Certificate in a healthcare occupation and transition to work while they also work to earn their GED. The efforts at WWC need to be further developed and aligned with the larger pathway concept and a goal of the Shifting Gears initiative: to prepare students to enter a college-credit (Advanced Certificate or associate degree) program without the need for remediation, successfully complete it, and enter the workforce.

John A Logan Community College

Model: Adult Bridge Program

Occupational Focus: Healthcare

Hypothesis:

- Hypothesis 1: Innovative instructional approaches

Target Audience: 9.0 and above grade level (Two Cohorts – Spring 2008 and Fall 2008)

Goals

JALC's proposal indicated that its SG initiative would focus on transitioning adult education students directly into healthcare career programs by using three main components: career exploration, college exploration, and contextualized instruction. Concentration would be aimed toward certificate programs, but also provide an opportunity for able students to transition into associate degree programs. The healthcare occupations bridge program specifically addressing the hypothesis that innovative instructional approaches will improve student transition programs. Four elements specified for the pilot program were:

- Blended workplace competencies, career exploration, and basic literacy and math skills in an occupational context.
- Academic and personal support services to help balance work, family, and school responsibilities.
- Bridge-defined populations/gaps: low-skilled, low income adults unprepared to enter postsecondary occupational programs in high growth fields; adult education students who still do not score high enough to enter postsecondary occupational programs.
- Implementation through building partnerships: community college internal departments; community entities; workforce partners; other community colleges; private sector

Student Recruitment

JALC's the target population included adults 18 years of age or older who had not achieved a high school diploma or GED and whose adult basic skill level corresponded to the 9.0 and above grade level. The course was marketed to incumbent workers and unemployed individuals via brochures and fliers

distributed on the JALC campus; public service announcement radio spots on four area stations; articles printed in the area's largest paper, an adult education newsletter, and the college's newspaper; informational letters sent to 33 district healthcare providers; and presentations to all GED instructors and classrooms of GED students. In preparation for the second cohort, they added TV spots to original recruitment efforts. Interested students were given the TABE and final selection was determined among those who scored at the 9th grade level in reading and the 7.6 level in math.

Core Components

Innovative Instruction – The curriculum was developed by a person experienced in curriculum design and GED instruction and was further developed by the bridge instructor who was described as someone who "always takes on challenges and is willing to experiment with new ideas." The instructor held a certification to teach Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and over the course of the semester, the students learned and received their CPR certificate. She employed various methods of instruction including lecture; individual and group activities; values, personality, and learning needs inventories; individual presentations; role-playing; guest speakers; group tours; and computer-assisted learning. Curriculum included an emphasis on math, goal setting, and career exploration exercises including occupational class shadowing and two job shadowing experiences in healthcare occupations of the students' interest. The instructor's curriculum guide and classroom observation revealed creatively contextualized healthcare content within the GED curriculum. One of her assignments required the students to individually look in the phone book and list the names of all types of medical specialties. As a class, students researched the meaning of the prefixes and suffixes of the occupational titles. The instructor created a learning environment that was holistic and designed to create community, exemplified by cooking and hosting a complete Thanksgiving dinner for her students.

Student Services – JALC adopted the intrusive advisement model for the Adult Education SG bridge students based on its success in the college's Student Success Center where it has resulted in increased retention and completion rates. JALC employed a full-time transition counselor for the SG bridge students who reported spending half of her time in direct contact with the students. With intrusive advisement, students and the transition counselor or faculty, or both, share responsibility for student success or failure. Ten activities were employed, including frequent phone contact with students to inquire about absenteeism, class instruction, personal issues, etc.; personal cards and letters of encouragement; one-on-one counseling to discuss attendance, career plans, personal issues, etc.; incentives and rewards for attendance such as gas cards and bus passes, pens, pencils, planners, and notepads; consistent classroom visits by the transition counselor to inform students about college activities and reinforce the importance of attendance; mid-semester student visits to the Adult Education office to discuss interim success; mentoring by the instructor and the transition counselor; career development activities and multiple celebratory events to mark success; and instructor's and SG leaders' deliberate efforts to meet bridge participants' families and friends including attendance at the GED graduation. The instructor was also directly involved in these efforts, traveling to students' homes to provide one-on-one tutoring and cooking a holiday dinner for the SG students in addition to daily support and encouragement.

Internal Partnership – One of the goals of the SG initiative was to improve the collaboration with and coordination among various "fragmented" student support services available at the college but relatively unknown and historically underused by students enrolled in Adult Education**.** During the course of the grant, Adult Education SG leaders engaged services from the Student Success Center, which offered a workshop on college survival success tips; the Financial Aid office that offered one-on-one help in filling out the FAFSA form, including emphasizing the timelines for application, answering SG students' questions and helping them create a "practice file" before they completed the on-line application process; the Advisement Department that sent a representative to the SG class to discuss the transition to credit

bearing courses and provided individual academic counseling about courses for the next semester and assigned a specific counselor for each SG bridge student to remain with them throughout their studies at JALC to provide consistency; the Assessment Department that administered the COMPASS and ASSET test, the first at no cost; and the Placement Department that provided resume preparation prior to the annual JALC Job Fair to ensure SG bridge students' resumes were error-free and included relevant, up to date information. In addition, the Student Activities and Cultural Events Department shared ideas about how SG bridge students can enrich their college experience by attending various activities and programs that are a part of college life. One SG leader stated that this kind of exposure to the main college campus is not typical in other GED classes.

Barriers and Policy Change

Student absence was an ongoing issue that challenged students' personal success as well as program success. Reasons for students' absences included complex family issues including chronic illnesses of family members and lack of transportation and the financial resources in spite of working part-time jobs. When the absence issue became a problem with the first cohort, JALC administrators instituted a 5-day absence policy and a $10.00 incentive payment policy; however, this decision had little impact because the courses were not graded. Despite efforts to improve attendance, some students did not complete homework and continued their sporadic attendance. This challenge was complicated by adult education instructor worries about the students' dropping out. Their goal is to keep the student in class any way they can and a frustrating reality most adult educators face, according to a JALC administrator. By October 2008, the staff had dissolved the attendance policy because of their understanding of the "many personal issues SG Healthcare Bridge students [and the general population of adult education students] face." Instead, the SG leaders approached students with positive reinforcement for attendance and completion of assignments. Time management skills, study skills, personal life skills, and other related "soft skills" were infused into the curriculum to counter the stresses and barriers that students face.

Other challenges related to providing adequate student services, including transportation, employment, and financial support. Transportation problems continued for some students who do not live on a public transportation route and whose attendance record did not earn them a gasoline card offered by the program to defer transportation costs. Employment or underemployment also presented a barrier. According to a JALC administrator, "often, employees are not willing to work with student schedules to allow them time off for the three-hour class. Campus employment is not available to them because the GED students are not enrolled in college classes." Also related to financial support, an administrator stated that the local WIA office notified them that there would be no funding for postsecondary training in the fall of 2008, explaining the WIA office had a waiting list of over 600 people who had requested assistance.

Policy issues referenced by the JALC administration included struggles with alignment of curriculum to address discrepancies between adult education and remedial education policies. Traditionally, adult education providers target GED attainment as the ultimate student outcome for their programs, but the expected outcome of GED students involved in bridge programs was to not only pass the GED but attain the academic skills necessary to enter college credit programs without needing developmental course work. To achieve that end goal in a semester's timeframe, JALC administrators determined that the minimum entry level requirements on the TABE had be set at 9.0 for reading and 7.6 for math. No deviations were allowed. The state's bridge program definition that implies that a single bridge course should prepare students for entry level college-credit courses without needing remediation, but this expectation does not seem feasible for many students, particularly students at or below the 9th grade level. JALC has targeted certificate programs for their GED graduates, and they point out the students can enroll in remedial courses simultaneously. For these students, transition to remedial education from the GED level appears to be a more feasible way to access college.

The inability to identify qualified, or nearly qualified, students for a healthcare bridge program was problematic for the site. Increased resources for support services and higher rates of reimbursement were seen as necessary to recruit more qualified students to the program. Also, partnerships with other similar initiatives funded by the ICCB and DCEO through WIA and Perkins (CTE) to enhance the regional healthcare workforce were seen as missed opportunities. If partnerships could have been forged, local administrators might have sparked sufficient interest to sustain the bridge program and address unmet healthcare workforce needs in the area.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 9 shows the total number of students who participated in the two JALC's pilot bridge cohorts was 14. The majority of students was female, White, without a high school diploma or GED, and because of their being GED participants, without any postsecondary credits. Almost half of the students reported extremely limited financial income at less than $3,000, and exactly half of the students were under 25 years of age. Three-fourths of the students completed the bridge program, but no students entered any form of postsecondary credit as a result of the bridge program. Also, no students were reported to be placed in employment.

Table 9. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	14
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	79%
• Percent Minority	14%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	50%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	70%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	0%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	42%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	17%
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	0%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	75%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	75%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	42%
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	0%
• Percent of all pilot students	0%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	0%
• Percent continued in employment	0%
• Percent placed or continued	0%
Source: Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), based on student-level data submitted by the SG pilot colleges on enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions for January 1 to December 31, 2008. These data also reflect corrected summary values from a review of the initial data by SG pilot site officials.	

Summary

JALC was successful in one of its goals for Shifting Gears: the creation of innovative instructional approaches. By hiring an experienced adult education instructor who also had some background in health care, as a certified instructor of CPR, JALC selected someone who was able to contextualize curriculum from a variety of prepared and self-created sources. She employed a variety of active learning strategies that engaged student interest and helped them to achieve certification in CPR while demonstrating compassion for them as adult learners. The goal to address policy change and barriers was less successful. Although the SG bridge administrators were successful in gaining more access to college services for their SG bridge students, they were not able to overcome some barriers that resulted in the policy agenda taking a lesser role. The major barrier was in recruiting enough qualified students. JALC adhered to 9th grade level they established in their proposal, insisting this minimum is necessary if a bridge program is to transition students to college-level work in a 16-week semester. Other issues created implementation challenges too. Students' career interests were not well-defined, and that, in addition to the low numbers of students, led administrators to decide not to continue a healthcare bridge program.

Lewis and Clark Community College

Model: Adult Bridge Program

Occupational Focus: Manufacturing

Hypothesis:

- Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches

Target Audience: 9.0 and above grade level (Two cohorts – Spring 2008 and Fall 2008)

Goals

The proposal from Lewis and Clark Community College (LCCC) offered the following goal: "the general purpose of the LCCC bridge program is to prepare adult students who are [at] the developmental level to enroll in an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree programs in one of two manufacturing programs: Process Operations Technology or Water Treatment Technologies. Students who enroll in the program also take a career development course that will identify their career interests, aptitude and abilities, and will provide them with transition planning. The specially developed Bridge to Manufacturing (Bridge) courses will combine basic skills with manufacturing-specific content. The program is designed to lead to employment in the manufacturing industry."

Student Recruitment

LCCC's adult education program recruited individuals age 18 and above who were unemployed or under-employed and seeking degrees in manufacturing-related areas of study. To participate, students needed to score at a 9.0 and above grade level on the Accuplacer math and reading comprehension placement tests. Administrators said they were flexible with this requirement, however, especially in math. Personal challenges were one reason for giving flexibility. One counselor observed, "students who are in the program have life issues [that] come up [and are] correlated with poor health, poor housing, transportation, childcare, etc." The students may or may not have obtained their GEDs already, and in this sense, the local project director described LCCC's bridge program as "actually a hybrid of the two [SG]

models of Adult Education and Developmental Education." Comparing students recruited in Spring 2008 to Fall 2008, the selection process for the Fall 2008 cohort was closer to the proposed target group of 9.0 and above grade level. One faculty member described students enrolled in the Fall 2008 term as "more capable" and "motivated to learn" than students enrolled in the Spring 2008 term.

Several recruitment methods were used, drawing on input from LCCC's Student Support Services Subcommittee. Units especially involved in recruitment were the Adult Education program, various regional social service agencies, and the Madison County Employment and Training Office, which traditionally works with under-employed and unemployed residents seeking advanced job skill training. In Spring 2008, the Adult Education staff visited classes and sent fliers via email to GED students, and in Fall 2008, the Student Support Services Subcommittee sent flyers to all GED students served during the previous fiscal year, reaching approximately 300 students. All by Fall 2008, word-of-mouth had become a viable recruitment strategy, with by teachers, case workers, or others knowledgeable about the bridge program actively recruiting students.

Core Components

Leadership – A leadership team, referred to as the "transition team," played an important role in the pilot program development and implementation process, and involved faculty from math, physics, manufacturing and water treatment, upper level administrators, adult education personnel, and personnel representing the LCCC admissions and counseling, and employment and training functions. LCCC's Transition Team is divided into the following sub-committee structures: assessment, student support, curriculum, sustainability, and action research. Further, LCCC has been involved in significant and sustained partnerships with local industries and institutions in various career fields.

Innovative Instruction – LCCC offers a 16-week adult bridge program that offers GED instruction through three complimentary courses. The students enroll in the specially developed "Bridge to Manufacturing" course, Tech 111, which prepares students for Process Technology through a contextualized math curriculum that combines basic math skills with manufacturing specific content. Students learn critical thinking skills that are contextualized with hands-on learning, standard quizzes and tests, as well as regular homework problems and a math anxiety survey. A math lab is correlated to what is taught in the math class. In English 125, students gain foundational concepts required to transition to college-level reading and writing. It is noteworthy that LCCC's bridge program changed the English course because students in the first cohort found contextualized communication component "too easy." English 125 is offered just prior to college-level English, to give students the level of communication skills that students would need to transition to a Technical Writing course needed to enroll in the Process Operations program. English 125 consists of essay writing, leading students through the process of formulating thesis statements, as well as assessments to determine their interest, aptitudes and abilities to further their educational training in manufacturing or processing. The third course was PSYC 130, which focused on career development (discussed below).

Curriculum delivery utilizes workshops and module formats to meet the critical time constraints of under-employed workers attending programs on a part-time basis. The pilot project uses a student-centered approach, with a team of teachers working cooperatively to develop the curriculum and teach the curriculum. The team meets and communicates regularly about student attendance, progress, grades, and similar matters. The faculty adapted their teaching styles to meet the needs and learning styles of the students, and they implemented a hands-on approach to their classes. When asked about the curriculum and instruction that was being used by LCCC, one of the older students commented that the bridge program was very different from when he was last in school (maybe 20-30 years prior), commenting that the LCCC instructors were "genuinely interested in you succeeding and making you want to learn" describing his earlier school years as impersonal and boring.

LCCC also relied upon community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide child care assistance. A unique academic support for students at LCCC's program involved the math resource lab and student tutors. While tuition-paying students paid an extra fee for the math resource center, bridge students used the math resource center free of charge. The math resource lab consists of student math tutors, paid as student workers, who help other students with various math problems. During the site visit, the researchers spoke to two advanced LCCC students serving as math tutors. Both of these student mentors worked at the math resource lab, and they spoke about the reward they felt in fulfilling the tutoring and mentoring role for the bridge students.

Career Development – This bridge program was unique in that it incorporated a college level career development course into the course sequence. Career assessments and career planning were addressed in PSYC 130 that integrates career development (awareness, decisions and action) with life choices. Faculty associated with the program described PSYC 130 as a critical part of the curriculum. Here, students participate in a variety of assessments to determine career interests, aptitudes, and abilities resulting in a transition plan that guides them through successive course work. PSYC 130 also allowed students to take personal assessments and then decide on their subsequent career path.

Student Services – LCCC offered several support services, many of which were provided by the project staff, adult education and college departments. Various services were implemented for each student at some point in the semester, including time management, problem solving, transportation, financial assistance, career and academic advising, tutoring, and counseling. Adult education personnel, community college student services staff, and the faculty were viewed by students as critically important to student success. In fact, our student interviews confirmed the faculty's role and named faculty members as most critical to their success. From giving them individual attention to taking time out to explain problems in class, students cited the faculty as helping them out a great deal. In addition, students identified the math resource lab and student tutors as important to helping them resolve various math problems. Finally, despite the successes of the student mentors, a counselor mentioned that a lack of funding led the college to decrease the number of tutors at the math resource lab. Whether the mentors would be involved in the bridge program in the future was uncertain.

Continuous Improvement – LCCC has employed an Action Research Team made up of experts from SIU-Edwardsville to facilitate and formalize an action research process. The SIU-E staff is engaged in the project by helping ensure that members of the Transition Team are included in design and operating from the same framework. The Action Research Team designs and implements an Action Research process that guides the formative assessment of the pilot. The Action Research consultants have played an important role in terms of guiding the Transition Team, via its subcommittees, to think of questions and reflect on the types of data necessary to answer those questions. Their involvement in Transition Team meetings is evidenced by documents they created that have been utilized to guide team members throughout the project. The Action Research Team includes the project administrator and coordinator who meet regularly to reflect on lessons learned and, based on those lessons, determine future steps. Their participation has led to more effective Transition Team meetings, documentation of meetings, student and staff interviews, their questions and reflections, and giving team members' time to reflect on the project in general.

Barriers and Policy Change

Recruiting substantial numbers of students into the bridge program was difficult, with the total number of students falling short of the estimates LCCC put into its grant application. At the time of the 2008 calendar year, after offering two cohort programs, LCCC administrators were proposing to recruit students directly from the PSYC 130 course, meaning their target group would expand beyond 9th to 12th

grade level. A recruitment issue raised by local administrators was the limited scope of the program that focused on process operations or water treatment of manufacturing. One LCCC administrator stated that the skills learned in either of these curricula, such as learning from plans and blueprints, were applicable to many trades and fields but students may not understand the potential to transfer these knowledge and skills.

Several policies were identified by local personnel. First, one policy looked at where the course resides at the college, i.e., who owns the course? The LCCC team made some progress on this issue by recognizing that the contextualized math course (Math 120) was a part of the math department and led to manufacturing or several other technical fields for which technical math is required. A second policy area involved enhancing coordination of adult education and community college programs. This policy addressed the sharing of teaching and coordination responsibilities, despite difficulties sharing payroll since adult education and "regular" faculty are paid from different sources. Part of the issue involves the federal and state policy and restrictions on co-mingling multiple types of funding.

A third policy area involves the identification of appropriate personnel to insure successful student transitions, as well as the identification of appropriate student support systems. Identifying which student supports are helpful has been a challenge. While most students seem capable of benefiting from taking the courses, many have difficulty persisting. To provide incentive to complete, LCCC is working with a local manufacturing firm to assist students in going straight to work after completing the bridge program. The fourth related policy area involves adequate student supports. Trying to identify which student supports are helpful and how to fund them is a challenge that the local Transition Team has attempted to resolve.

The final policy area involves the sustainability of funding. Plans were being made to draw on Perkins (CTE) funds to sustain aspects of the bridge program through modularized instruction and modified developmental and CTE course work. In this way, the SG initiative created an opportune test bed for experimentation that continues on.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 10 shows the total number of students who participated in the two LCCC's pilot bridge cohorts was 12, including a few students who began in the Spring 2008 cohort and left the program and returned to participate in the second cohort offered in Fall 2008. The majority of students was male, White, less than 25 years of age, without a high school diploma and GED and therefore without any postsecondary credits. Half of the students completed the bridge program, and 42% of these students entered some form of postsecondary credit as a result of the bridge program. Two-thirds of the students who continued at LCCC participated in remedial education, with substantial credit accumulation occurring in remedial course work. Employment data were not submitted by LCCC for their bridge program students.

Table 10. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	12
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	25%
• Percent Minority	25%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	58%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	67%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	33%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	NA
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	NA
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	0%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	50%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	50%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	42%
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	160%
• Percent of all pilot students	67%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	NA
• Percent continued in employment	NA
• Percent placed or continued	NA
Source: ICCB, based on student-level data submitted by the SG pilot colleges on enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions for January 1 – December 31, 2008. These data reflect corrected summary values from a review of the initial data by SG pilot site officials.	

Summary

The bridge program offered by LCCC was proposed as an adult bridge program but it evolved into a blend of the adult education and developmental education models because of the qualifications of students recruited and the desire by the college to create a sustainable model. In this respect, integrating adult education, developmental education and CTE (manufacturing) provided an even more promising model than the two distinct models of adult education and developmental education. The bridge program developed by LCCC offers a contextualized curriculum that was developed by a team of LCCC faculty, under the guidance of a leadership group called the Transition Team. A college-credit career development

course accompanied the developmental math and manufacturing instruction. Continuous improvement was another unique feature of this pilot demonstration project, with SIU-Edwardsville faculty playing a key role in helping LCCC personnel collect and utilize data to develop the program and refine implementation. Moving forward, the continuous improvement initiative is attributed with providing LCCC personnel with the know-how to sustain this initiative. With respect to student participation, LCCC experienced recruitment challenges with two 2008 cohorts in terms of identifying sufficient numbers of students who met the eligibility criteria and finding students who showed an interest in manufacturing careers. Ultimately, 12 students were enrolled in the two cohorts, including some students who began but did not finish the bridge program in spring and re-enrolled in the fall. Of all 12 students, one-half completed the bridge program in spring or fall, and most continued on in some form of postsecondary credit instruction, typically additional remedial education. Employment data were not provided to the evaluators, possibly because most students completed in December 2008, and there was insufficient time to collect follow-up data since the data collection period ended for this evaluation at the end of 2008.

McHenry County College

Model: Adult Bridge Program

Occupational Focus: Manufacturing

Hypothesis:

- Hypothesis 2: Innovative instructional approaches

Target Audience: 6.0 to 8.9 grade level and 9.0 and above grade level (Two cohorts each Spring 2008 and Spring 2009)

Student Recruitment

Various methods were used to recruit a predominantly English as Second Language (ESL) student cohorts. Advertisements in a local Latino/a newspaper, mailers to ESL students, visits to a local homeless shelter, and presentations to all adult education classes were some of the recruitment methods. Students who were previously enrolled or heard about the program also introduced their friends the program resulting in growing emphasis on word-of-mouth. The MCC pilot program was especially active in recruiting the students by making two visits to every ESL class, and consulting with the ESL instructors regarding the recommendation of the prospective students. Also, individuals employed in the manufacturing sector of the local workforce were invited to give informational talks about manufacturing careers. A total of 50 students were enrolled in the initial two cohorts in Spring 2008, with one cohort targeting students who were taking adult education/ESL classes and who tested at the high intermediate level (9.0 grade or above) in math and the advanced English level (6.0 to 8.9 grade or higher). For the second cohort, the faculty recruited students whose academic skills were 6^{th} through 8.9^{th} grade levels or at the low intermediate ESL level. MCC administrators estimated about 275 of 1,400 students enrolled in the adult education programs at the college were eligible for the second cohort, so insufficient capacity to accommodate these students becoming an important concern.

Core Components

Innovative Instruction – The curriculum consisted of three modules. The Module I curriculum consisted of 48 hours of instruction emphasizing technical math in manufacturing. It also included workplace

communication skills and aimed to prepare the students for college placement tests with the goal of minimizing the need for developmental course work. Module II consisted of 48 hours of instruction. In this phase, the students were introduced to welding and other technical skills. Instruction was focused on blueprint reading and industrial safety. The curriculum was aligned with key elements of MET 100 (blueprint reading) and IMT 116 (Industrial Safety Management) and was tied to proficiency exams, including practice exams. Module III focused on employability skills that emphasize workplace behaviors and job search. The three modules were offered as non-credit course because the SG program was under the auspices of continuing education, which is a non-credit division of MCC. The SG program director explained that the program belonged in continuing education to avoid the lengthy curriculum approval process necessary for credit courses and to provide quick responses to the changing nature of the manufacturing industry. He said, "In order to offer the classes through the adult education, we have to go through ICCB approval, and the process is lengthy. So we would not probably offer anything until at least fall 2009, or spring 2010." Instrumental to making this curriculum work was the employment of two retired manufacturing experts in the region. Working collaboratively to bring the students the most up-to-date information about the manufacturing knowledge and skills, these individuals encouraged a high level of student engagement. They developed a rapport with the students that was highly conducive to their learning and feeling part of a learning community, and this element of the bridge program was seen as critically important to student learning and retention.

Leadership – A leadership team provided guidance on the development and implementation of the manufacturing bridge program, helping to develop productive relationships within the college as well as with employers and manufacturing-related professional and community groups. The college assembled administrators having a range of leadership responsibilities, including adult education, CTE, and other college credit programs. These leaders were especially important because MCC was reorganized during the time the bridge program was being implemented. The leadership group paid attention to internal resource issues, including personnel turnover due largely to retirement, and it helped to forge relationships with units in the college like the Academy for High Performance that provides a fast-track curriculum so that students can complete an associate of applied science (AAS) degree in two years or less. AAS degree programs were envisioned as an option for students who completed the bridge program and desired further postsecondary education.

Employer/Community Partnership – To improve students' transition to employment, the leadership team strived to get input from local manufacturers, including soliciting input from manufacturers through MCC's industrial advisory meetings, locally organized activities with manufacturing employers and groups (LEAN series at MCC Shah Center, Precision Metalforming Association best practices meeting, and McHenry County Economic Development Corporation manufacturing events), as well as individual manufacturing firms. In addition, plant tours were conducted when Module II was offered to students in June 2008, and these tours were reported to have a tremendous impact on the first cohort's learning experiences. According to the MCC coordinator, the tour provided an opportunity for students to get detailed ideas about the jobs. Purposely scheduled at different types of manufacturing facilities, the tours opened students' eyes to the diversity of jobs available in manufacturing, helping them to plan ahead for their studies and future careers. The grant coordinator initiated contacts with local manufacturing companies for the tours, explaining students' biases against manufacturing and the necessity of changing their prejudice. She observed, "While I teach ESL students, I recognize that most students misunderstand manufacturing as a dirty job." At these plant visits, the company shared details about employee benefits and employment requirements. After touring the plants, new content was added to the employability curriculum.

Transition Coordinator and Support Services – Identified by students as critical to their success, MCC's Transition Coordinator arranged instructional advising and facilitated the awarding of grant funds so that students received free tuition, fees, books, childcare, and transportation. She played an important

role as a case manager, describing herself as an "advisor, counselor, emotional supporter, and staff arranging child care and transportation." From the beginning of the program, the Transition Coordinator encouraged students, recognizing the struggles they face. She observed, gave the message to the students as often as possible that she was very willing to help them. She told us one of her favorite words of advice is, "If it is hard, you need to see me." A former student expressed his sincere appreciation for the coordinator's assistance by saying, "She was always by my side in every step." She spent extra hours beyond her regular work hours to assist students. For example, she connected Spanish-speaking students with a Spanish-speaking tutor, she helped a student's son to complete a community college application, and she helped a former student transfer to another college and secure financial aid.

Barriers and Policy Change

MCC administrators identified several barriers. The first was the lack of computer access and computer literacy among the adult education students. A majority did not to have access to computers and the lack of computer literacy was identified as a critical barrier to students' employability. As a consequence, computer literacy was integrated into the curriculum to help the students complete resumes and search websites.

The second barrier involved students' math skills, which was addressed by devoting more math curriculum and instruction and offering a math enhancement class. Even with these changes, the instructors pointed out students still needed more math. A third barrier involved challenges to providing the students with equipment needed for hands-on training. The students had difficulty visualizing the real parts of machines that were used at the workplace, with one instructor noting "To understand what they're learning, they need to have something solid in their hands."

The fourth barrier involved developing partnerships with companies for internships and apprenticeships. Despite the faculty's efforts, the college was unable to provide students with internships or apprenticeships. Employers were resistant to offering internships due to liability issues. An MCC administrator observed that this barrier could be overcome by either working with employment agencies, who might be eligible to offer internships, or with the Workforce Network Center, which might be able to offer on-the-job training.

A final barrier involved identifying students who were employed by local manufacturers who were interested and able to benefit but who held high school diplomas. More flexibility in the targeted group was recommended to maximize the benefit of the bridge program for the low-skilled population that has a strong interest in manufacturing.

A local policy issue that arose had to do with the lengthy process of board approval for hiring the program director and coordinator positions, involving classification of the position and recruitment. A second policy issue involved difficulty seeking tuition assistance for the students who wanted to continue their postsecondary education in the area of manufacturing but who faced difficulties with employment and immigration. The faculty explained that it was impossible for low-income students who support families to pursue further education. MCC administrators advised these students to first get a job and later pursue postsecondary education with the support of their employers.

Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Table 11 shows 50 students were enrolled in two cohorts in MCC's manufacturing bridge program in spring 2008. Nearly all of the students were Limited English Proficient (LEP), minority, and 25 years of age or older, with nearly half being female. Nearly all of the students did not have a high school diploma or GED at the time of enrolling in the bridge program, and none of the students had any postsecondary

credits. Most reported a family income of $21,000 or higher. Of all enrollees, 54% successfully completed the bridge program; however, none of these students had enrolled in postsecondary credit instruction at MCC as a result of the program, despite their desire to do so. Employment of the group was strong, with most students continuing employment they had prior to the program, but 22% indicating that they were placed into employment as a result of the program.

Table 11. Student Enrollment, Characteristics, and Outcomes

Total Program Enrollments	50
Student Characteristics:	
• Percent Female	48%
• Percent Minority	90%
• Percent less than 25 years of age	17%
• Percent with no HS diploma or GED	84%
• Percent with any postsecondary credits	0%
• Percent with family income less than $3000	4%
• Percent with family income $21,000 or higher	83%
• Percent with Limited English Language Proficiency	90%
Student Outcomes:	
Student successfully completed the bridge program	
• Percent yes	54%
• Percent pending	0%
• Percent yes or pending	54%
Student entered postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program	
• Percent of non-missing total	2%
Student took one or more postsecondary remedial courses	
• Percent of postsecondary student credit entries	0%
• Percent of all pilot students	0%
Student placed into employment as a result of the program	
• Percent placed in employment	22%
• Percent continued in employment	48%
• Percent placed or continued	70%
Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1- December 31, 2008. Enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.	

Summary

The manufacturing bridge program at MCC was one of two pilot demonstration sites that enrolled a high proportion of ESL learners. In the case of MCC, the region is experiencing a large influx of immigrants and ESL residents, and the college is committed to implementation of the adult bridge model as a strategy to meet the needs of these students. The modularized curriculum emphasizes foundational skills, technical competencies and employability skills, blended with tours of local manufacturing facilities. The instructors who have extensive expertise in manufacturing and strong ties to the local employment community are a major asset to the program, and they are identified by the bridge program coordinator as one of the chief reasons for student learning and retention. MCC's student population is highly diverse, with nearly all of the students being minority, and nearly half female and nontraditional to the manufacturing field. Employment data are promising for this program; however, postsecondary enrollment appears weak, possibly because limited time has passed to allow the students to enroll in college credit programs, including remedial programs.

Cross-Case Results

Table 12 summarizes results across all 10 of the community college bridge programs, providing a means of comparing hypotheses and core components that were identified by local administrators and confirmed by the qualitative evaluators. Table 13 provides a cross-case depiction of barriers identified by local program coordinators and stakeholders, and Table 14 similarly shows policy changes happening at the state and/or local level, as reported by local program coordinators and other knowledgeable informants about the pilot demonstration programs.

The SG 1.0 evaluation focused on hypothesis B which focused on innovative instructional approaches almost exclusively, and we observed the following major cross-case findings:

- Illinois' SG 1.0 bridge programs emphasized a range of instructional innovations, including contextualized instruction, team teaching, computerized support, hands-on and laboratory-based instruction, cohort-based learning communities, and other forms of active learning. Contextualized instruction was probably the most pervasive of the general approaches, and it was carried out in many different ways, with the most common strategy associated with basic skills (math, reading and writing), career development, and the integration of academic and CTE knowledge and skills by using real-world problems and applications.
- College leadership and internal alignment of participating units within community colleges were crucial to the development of bridge courses and to program implementation, particularly for the adult bridge programs (Model Two – Adult Education) that were linking adult education units with community college developmental education and CTE.
- All three core elements of Illinois' bridge definition – contextualized instruction, support services including transition coordinators/case managers, and career development were evident in the bridge programs, especially support services and Transition Coordinators/Case Managers.
- With respect to Transition Coordinators/Case Managers, the data show important results in that higher rates of student use of Transition Coordinators/Case Managers correlated with higher rates of student completion when the following occurred:
    - Students receive career orientation more than once;
    - Students receive admissions and financial aid assistance at least once;
    - Students receive advising at least once;

- Students receive transportation assistance at least once; and
- Students meet more frequently with an assigned transition coordinator or case manager.

Two results stand out as important differences between Model One – Developmental Education and Model Two – Adult Education:

- Students enrolled in Model One – Developmental Education bridge programs accessed Transition Coordinators/Case Managers and various student services more than students enrolled in bridge programs associated with Model Two – Adult Education. We think this difference is attributable to location and historic connections between developmental education and support services that are still weak or do not (yet) exist for AE bridge programs. In some cases AE bridge programs are housed at the community college but marginal to the college mission and core operation. In some cases, the AE programs are offered off site. Fortunately, we observed several cases where Shifting Gears was instrumental in helping AE units strengthen connections with developmental education, CTE and other units in the community college, bringing visibility and credibility to AE.
- Though not universally true, we tended to see more coordination among administrators, faculty and staff when Model One – Developmental Education bridge programs were implemented than Model Two – Adult Education bridge programs. Recognized as part of the community college mission, personnel associated with developmental education and CTE have a shared history of working together whereas Adult Education personnel have often not.

Table 12. Core Components of the Pilot Demonstration Programs Identified by Program Coordinators

Core Components	Model One – Developmental Education			Model Two – Adult Education						
	College of DuPage (Manufac)	College of Lake County (Manufac)	Oakton Community College (Health)	Black Hawk College (TDL)	CCC – Olive Harvey College (Health)	CCC – Malcolm X College (Health)	CCC – Wilbur Wright College (Health)	John A Logan College (Health)	Lewis and Clark Community College (Manufac)	McHenry County College (Manufac)
CBO or Employer partnership (Hypothesis 1)			X							X
Innovative instructional Approaches (Hypothesis 2)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
E-learning and blended online learning (Hypothesis 3)	X									
Student support services	X	X	X	X				X	X	X
Transition coordinator	X		X	X				X	X	X
Leadership				X	X				X	X
Internal partnership					X	X	X	X		
Career development		X							X	
Continuous improvement				X					X	
Alignment				X						
Employee Financial Assistance			X							

Table 13. Barriers to Bridge Program Implementation and Participation Identified by Program Coordinators

Barriers	Model One – Developmental Education			Model Two – Adult Education						
	College of DuPage (Manufac)	College of Lake County (Manufac)	Oakton Community College (Health)	Black Hawk College (TDL)	CCC – Olive Harvey College (Health)	CCC – Malcolm X College (Health)	CCC – Wilbur Wright College (Health)	John A Logan College (Health)	Lewis and Clark Community College (Manufac)	McHenry County College (Manufac)
College preparation & placement (assessment)		X	X		X	X	X	X		X
College employment-related challenges			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Student services (e.g., financial, transportation)		X			X	X	X	X		
Student recruitment	X	X	X					X	X	
Student computer literacy			X	X	X	X	X			X
College capacity (personnel, space)			X		X	X	X			X
Curriculum & instruction			X		X	X	X			X
Student attendance					X	X	X	X		
WIA ineligibility					X	X	X	X		
Scheduling	X			X						
Employer involvement		X								X
ICCB remedial reimbursement			X							

Table 14. Policy Changes (Local and State) Identified by Pilot Demonstration Program Coordinators

Policy Change – Local and State	Model One – Developmental Education			Model Two – Adult Education						
	College of DuPage (Manufac)	College of Lake County (Manufac)	Oakton Community College (Health)	Black Hawk College (TDL)	CCC – Olive Harvey College (Health)	CCC – Malcolm X College (Health)	CCC – Wilbur Wright College (Health)	John A Logan College (Health)	Lewis and Clark Community College (Manufac)	McHenry County College (Manufac)
Student support (transition coor, financial aid, etc.)				X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Adult Ed, WIA & Perkins alignment					X	X	X	X	X	
Course approval	X	X						X		X
College hiring & compensation	X								X	X
Admissions			X	X				X		
Curriculum alignment				X				X	X	
Tuition policy, including reciprocity			X							X
Employee benefits, including tuition			X	X						
Course withdrawal		X								
Advisor-student ratio			X							
Course length (pace)			X							

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

This section discusses quantitative results of the Illinois Shifting Gears pilot projects. It includes the purpose of the quantitative analysis, the methods that were used, and the results of the analysis. It also provides a discussion of the relationships among the pilot results which have implications for further study or changes to policy. Finally, this section provides recommendations for policy, data collection requirements, further analysis of the pilot results, and procedures for future pilot projects.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the quantitative component of the evaluation was to "…evaluate the outcomes of the pilot demonstration projects, especially with respect to their performance in improving student transition outcomes, and to relate these results to differences among projects in the models as implemented. In particular, the evaluation will attempt to measure the extent to which the pilot demonstration models yield superior results to traditional models for remediation."[4]

In particular, the evaluation plan for the pilot projects was originally intended to answer the following questions:

1. What percent of students meet the academic skill standards needed to enter the occupational program, compared to some baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
2. What percent of students enter a postsecondary occupational program in the selected program area?
3. What percent of students complete the occupational program compared to some baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
4. What percent of students earn the applicable certification or license for the occupational program compared to some baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
5. What is the average time required for students to complete remedial/developmental coursework, compared to some baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?
6. What percent of students obtain employment in the occupation compared to some baseline for students with similar remediation requirements?

While the quantitative evaluation was not able to answer all of these questions, it was able to shed light on several of them, and suggest some relationships among the pilot results which have implications for the implementation of bridge programs in Illinois.

Methods

As previously discussed, Illinois adopted a pilot model strategy as its primary response to the Shifting Gears initiative. These pilots were intended to help the state develop polices that would promote the implementation of effective bridge programs. It was decided at the outset of the pilot projects that student information would be collected from the pilots to support the evaluation activity. The evaluators consulted with the Shifting Gears workgroup to determine the scope of the evaluation, and the questions that we would attempt to answer. This was followed by consultation with the pilot projects themselves once they were underway, including notification of the types of data that would be collected. In particular,

[4] *Shifting Gears in Illinois Evaluation Plan*, Office of Community College Research and Leadership at UIUC, and Workforce Enterprise Services, 7/23/2007, p.11.

pilot project input was obtained from the data collection for pilot student activities and services. Following this consultation, a data dictionary and data submission procedures were developed jointly with the ICCB Research and Policy Studies staff. This dictionary and related record edit requirements were sent to the pilot projects on December 18, 2008, with a requested submission date of March 2, 2009. The data dictionary included student level record detail, including identifying information, demographics, student services, enrollment information, course detail, student test results, and project completion data, for students enrolled in the pilot projects through December, 2008.[5]

The pilot colleges prepared student records using the data dictionary instructions and an Excel worksheet prepared by the evaluator. The colleges submitted these student records to the Illinois Community College Board, using standard file transfer procedures used for submission of annual student records. Once the data had been submitted by all pilots, ICCB Research and Policy Studies staff worked with the ICCB Information Technology staff to produce summary tabulations by college, and in some cases by pilot cohort. These summary counts were provided to the evaluator, which incorporated the values into an analysis worksheets using Excel. This analysis worksheet was used to communicate preliminary results to the colleges, to assist in data correction activities, to examine relationships among pilot data elements, and to produce the tables in this report.

It is important to recognize that while student-level records were submitted to ICCB from the pilots, the evaluator received only summary data at the pilot project level, and in some cases the pilot project "cohort" (term) levels. This was an agreed condition of the student record submission process, and was done to avoid potential objections from the pilot colleges based on student confidentiality, as well as the procedural delays that would have been associated with developing data sharing agreements between the colleges and the evaluators. The student records included identifying information, including SSN, so that these records could subsequently be matched with other administrative data sources and UI wage data. Although this type of matching could be done in the future, it is beyond the scope of this quantitative analysis.

An original objective of the quantitative analysis was to compare pilot students from each project with comparison students having similar characteristics, especially similar basic skills. Discussions were held with each pilot project regarding this requirement, and the pilots developed an approach to selection of comparison candidate records, in consultation with the evaluator. Unfortunately, only three of the ten pilots were able to submit these records in sufficient numbers to be useful for analysis, which was insufficient to support this objective.

Pilot Quantitative Results

Student Enrollments

Table 15 provides basic information on the number of student enrollments for each of the ten pilot projects. The projects are sorted by the two model categories: Developmental Education (model one) and Adult Education (model two). Of the 294 total unique pilot student records, 251 (83.4 percent) were enrolled in one of the seven Adult Education pilots.

The bridge projects were required to focus on one of three career clusters (sectors): healthcare; manufacturing; or transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL). By far the greatest percentage of pilot

[5] *Shifting Gears Pilot Project Data Elements*, ICCB and Workforce Enterprise Services, 12/17/2008.

students were enrolled in one of the five healthcare pilots (62.2%), followed by the four manufacturing pilots (29.3%). There was one TDL pilot which accounted for 8.5% of the students.

Table 15. Student Enrollments

College	Model	Cluster	Enrollments
DuPage	Developmental Education	Manufacturing	12
Lake County	Developmental Education	Manufacturing	12
Oakton	Developmental Education	Health Care	19
Developmental Education Model Totals			**43**
Black Hawk	Adult Education	TDL	25
Chicago Malcolm X	Adult Education	Health Care	50
Chicago Olive-Harvey	Adult Education	Health Care	61
Chicago Wilbur Wright	Adult Education	Health Care	39
McHenry County	Adult Education	Manufacturing	50
John A Logan	Adult Education	Health Care	14
Lewis & Clark	Adult Education	Manufacturing	12
Adult Education Model Totals			**251**
Total All Pilots			**294**

Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Enrollments defined as unique student identifiers reported in one or more term submissions. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.

Student Characteristics

Table 16 shows results for the demographic and educational variables that were collected for students. Adult Education pilots in particular enrolled a student population which was more female (62.5%), more often members of racial and ethnic minority groups (86.1%) and younger (42.1% less than 25 years old) than the Developmental Education pilot students. In addition, over a third of the Adult Education students had family incomes of less than $3,000 (36.8%), and the vast majority had not graduated from high school or obtained a GED (85.6%). Almost half (45.8%) had limited English language proficiency.

Table 16. Student Characteristics

Student Characteristics	All Pilots	Developmental Education	Adult Education
Percent female	60.5%	48.8%	62.5%
Percent minority	81.3%	53.5%	86.1%
Percent less than 25 years old	40.6%	32.6%	42.1%
Percent with no HS diploma or GED	74.2%	12.5%	85.6%
Percent with any postsecondary credits	12.1%	42.5%	6.5%
Percent w/ annual income less than $3000	30.8%	0.0%	36.8%
Percent w/ annual income $21,000 or higher	43.4%	88.5%	34.6%
Percent w/ limited English language proficiency	40.5%	9.3%	45.8%
Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Percents exclude non-reported totals unless otherwise indicated. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.			

Student Outcomes

Table 17 provides an overview of the pilot project outcomes by model, including completions and other outcomes, again disaggregated for Developmental Education and Adult Education pilots. Program completion rates were substantially higher among the Developmental Education pilots. Nearly three-fourths of the Developmental Education students completed their bridge programs (72.0 percent), while about four in ten Adult Education students completed their bridge programs (42.1 percent).

Table 17. Student Enrollment and Completions

Student Enrollment and Completion	All Pilots	Developmental Education	Adult Education
Total students	294	43	251
Students completing the bridge program	122	31	91
Students not completing	137	12	125
Students with completion status not reported	35	0	35
Percent completed (of reported)	47%	72%	42.1%
Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Percents exclude non-reported totals unless otherwise indicated. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.			

Table 18 presents student transitions to postsecondary education and employment. The Developmental Education pilots exhibited greater rates of entry into postsecondary credit instruction than did the Adult Education pilots (30.2% vs. 14.3%). This is not surprising given the focus of these pilot models on

developmental instruction in the postsecondary setting. Lower rates of entry into remedial instruction among those students entering postsecondary instruction for the Developmental Education pilots is also to be expected (23.1% vs. 41.7%), given the differing emphases and target populations of the two models.

Although direct placement of students in employment at the conclusion of the bridge programs was not high (9.3%), one result not anticipated is the very high percentage of both pilot student groups which were employed prior to entry in the bridge program, and which remained employed (56.5% overall). The large percentage of students who were working and attending bridge classes is relevant for understanding student outcomes and the types of services students need.

Table 18. Postsecondary Transitions and Employment

Postsecondary Transitions and Employment	All Pilots	Developmental Education	Adult Education
Percent entering postsecondary credit instruction as a result of the program (of all students)	16.7%	30.2%	14.3%
Percent of postsecondary students entering remedial instruction	36.7%	23.1%	41.7%
Percent entering employment (placements)	9.3%	9.3%	9.2%
Percent continuing employment	56.5%	65.1%	50.8%
Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Percents exclude non-reported totals unless otherwise indicated. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.			

Role of the Transition Coordinator or Case Manager

An important feature of many of the pilot projects was the provision of staff assistance to the pilot students in addition to the contextualized instruction. To examine the role of this staff support, we collected detailed information on the access of students to a staff person who could function as a transition coordinator or case manager. Having access to such a person is generally seen as a potentially key element of success for student retention, persistence and program completion. Table 19 shows the questions that we asked about this staff person and the students' access to him or her.

Table 19. Questions on Transition Coordinator/Case Manager

Transition Coordinator/Case Manager. Did the student have an assigned transition coordinator, case manager, or other staff person who is responsible for coordinating the student's services, advocating for the student, and otherwise facilitating the student's progress through the program and assisting the student in making the transition to the next level? 1- Yes, a person is assigned specifically to the bridge program students. 2- Yes, a person is assigned to the bridge program students and other students. 3- No, but these services are available from other staff that the student may access. 4- No.
Frequency of Contact with Transition Coordinator/Case Manager If (1) or (2) to prior question, How often did this student meet with or directly communicate with the assigned staff person? 1- The student did not meet with the assigned staff person 2- The student met once with the assigned staff person 3- The student met two to five times with the assigned staff person 4- The student met more than five times with the assigned staff person

Results from these questions are provided in Table 20, which reveals some interesting differences between the two pilot models in the pattern of access to such a staff person. Nearly two thirds (72.1 percent) of the Developmental Education pilot students were assigned a specific staff person who was dedicated to the bridge students. Slightly less than half (48.6 percent) of the Adult Education pilot students enjoyed this level of access. All Developmental Education students had either this level of access or the next level down, i.e., access to a staff person who was shared with other non-bridge students. Just over half of the Adult Education students had this level of access. Slightly over a third of the Adult Education students (36.4 percent) had access to the services not from an assigned transition coordinator, but from other staff in the college. Ten percent of these students had no access to these services at all.

Table 20. Transition Coordinator/Case Manager (TC/CM) Access

Transition Coordinator/Case Manager Access	All Pilots	Developmental Education	Adult Education
Percent with specific TC/CM assignment	52.1%	72.1%	48.6%
Percent with shared access to TC/CM	8.3%	27.9%	4.9%
Percent with services available elsewhere	31.0%	0.0%	36.4%
Percent with no access to TC/CM services	8.6%	0.0%	10.1%
Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Percents exclude non-reported totals unless otherwise indicated. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.			

For those students with access to a transition coordinator or case manager, we asked about the frequency of contact with this person. The assumption is that more frequent contact would be associated with better retention and completion, because the student is addressing whatever problems are present which might otherwise result in non-completion. However, frequent contact could also proxy for students with more substantial problems.

Table 21 displays the results for frequency of contact with the transition coordinator or case manager. There are large differences between the two pilot models for this element. Nearly nine in ten (88.4%) Developmental Education students met with their assigned transition coordinator or case manager over five times during the course of the bridge program. By contrast, just over a third (35.2%) of Adult Education students met with their assigned transition coordinator or case manager over five times, and nearly a fourth (23.2%) never met with this person.

A frequency score was derived as an estimate of the minimum number of times a typical student met with their assigned transition coordinator. This estimate suggests that Developmental Education pilot students met with their assigned transition coordinators nearly twice as often.

Table 21. Student Frequency of Contact with Transition Coordinator/Case Manager

Contact with Transition Coordinator/ Case Manage	All Pilots	Developmental Education	Adult Education
Percent of students who did not meet	17.3%	0.0%	23.2%
Percent of students meeting once	12.5%	2.3%	16.0%
Percent of students meeting two to five times	21.4%	9.3%	25.6%
Percent of students meeting more than five times	48.8%	88.4%	35.2%

Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Percents exclude non-reported totals unless otherwise indicated. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.

**Frequency Score* is an estimate of the minimum number of times a typical student met with the TC/CM based on the number of students reported in each frequency category.

Services Received by Students

In addition to measuring the access of students to a transition coordinator, we collected information on the services that students received during their participation in the bridge pilot. The SG pilot project data dictionary included definitions of these service elements, based on suggestions from the pilots themselves. Table 22 provides these service categories and their definitions, along with the question that the pilot projects were asked to complete for each student with respect to each of these services.

Table 22. Student Support Services

Questions on Services
Complete the following elements for each pilot student, using one of the following response categories: *1- This service was not available to the bridge program students.* *2- The service was available, but the student did not receive it.* *3- The student received the service once.* *4- The student received the service more than once.*
College orientation: Student participation in college orientation, including one or more of the following: bridge program orientation, campus visits, program/classroom shadowing, and information about college success courses, financial aid workshops, and assistance with admissions.
Career orientation: Student participation in career orientation, including employer visits and training program presentations.
Admissions and financial aid assistance: Student receipt of individualized assistance with the college admissions process or completion of financial aid applications.
Academic supports: Student participation in academic support activities, such as peer tutoring, supplemental instruction, and note-taking assistance.
Learning community: Student participation in a structured cohort of peer learners intended to provide mutual support and instruction.
Work-based learning: Student participation in internships, on-the-job training, job shadowing, work experience, probationary job placement, or other work-based learning arrangement as part of the program.
Advising: Student participation in career advising, academic advising, and career coaching, or related advising services.
Counseling: Student participation in individualized counseling.
Job search assistance: Student participation in job development, job club services, job coaching, or job keeping skills training.
Transportation: Student receipt of transportation assistance, including bus tokens, cab reimbursement, mileage reimbursement, and gas cards.
Child care: Student receipt of child care assistance, including reimbursement of child care expenses or access to day care facilities on campus.
Exam fees: Student receipt of reimbursement for fees or other costs associated with taking certification or other required examinations, or direct payment of fees by the college.
Other supportive service: Student receipt of other supportive service not included above, including housing assistance or assistance with utility costs.

Table 23 provides data on the percent of students in each model using the various services, sorted by the frequency of access for all pilot students. The differences in service utilization between the pilot models are reflective of the different settings and targets of the two models. In general, there is a much greater level of service usage among the Developmental Education students.

Given the large numbers of students working during their participation in the bridge program, as well as the significant barriers to employment encountered by many of these students (particularly among the Adult Education students) it is somewhat surprising that so few students were recorded as having received transportation assistance or child care assistance. It may be that more students were receiving these services on their own initiative, and therefore were not reported in these categories by the bridge program staff.

Table 23. Students Receiving Specific Services

Student Services	All Pilots	Developmental Education	Adult Education
College orientation	61.8%	100.0%	54.9%
Career orientation	55.2%	58.1%	54.6%
Advising	52.4%	100.0%	43.3%
Academic supports	48.0%	69.8%	44.1%
Learning community	33.1%	81.4%	24.0%
Admissions and financial aid assistance	29.2%	88.4%	18.7%
Job search assistance	18.0%	44.2%	13.3%
Counseling	15.9%	81.4%	3.5%
Exam fees	15.5%	27.9%	13.3%
Transportation assistance	14.9%	9.3%	16.0%
Internship or work-based learning	5.5%	23.3%	2.2%
Child care assistance	0.7%	0.0%	0.8%

Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Refers to receipt of service at least one time. Percents exclude non-reported totals unless otherwise indicated. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs.

Relationships between Bridge Program Components and Student Outcomes

An important objective of the quantitative evaluation is to identify any relationships that may exist between the results of the pilots and core program components. For instance, if those pilot programs that provided students with a dedicated transition coordinator had much better program completion results than those that did not, it would suggest that the provision of a transition coordinator could be an important component of bridge program success generally. Or, if pilot programs whose students received particular services, such as career orientation, were also the pilots with the best outcomes, it would at least suggest that these services might contribute to student success. Further, these types of relationships between program components and results would tend to carry more weight if they were stronger than the relationships that existed between student characteristics such as gender, race, and education and student outcomes.

Table 24 provides results of a statistical analysis conducted at the pilot project level using Kendall's rank order correlation, which is a non-parametric statistical test used to estimate the degree of concurrence between paired rankings. We examined the relationship between the rankings of the pilot projects on the percentage of students completing their bridge programs, and several independent variables drawn from

the pilot level summary data. These included the percentage of students receiving various services, the frequency of interaction with a transition coordinator or case manager, and the percent of students with specific characteristics that might be associated with successful completion or a lack thereof. The rank order correlation method produces a value which ranges from (1) to (-1), where (1) corresponds to identical rankings, (-1) corresponds to opposite (reverse order) rankings, and (0) corresponds to a total absence of concurrence between the rankings.

Disclosure of some caveats should precede any discussion of these results. First and foremost, the results are based on a very small number of observations (10 total of which 7 are adult education pilots). Rank order correlation values should be viewed as suggestive. Secondly, although correlation values have been provided for all pilots, the two types of pilot projects are distinct in terms of some of the components that might influence these results. Therefore, they may not be comparable. Since there were only three developmental education pilots, no separate rank order correlations were computed for these pilots. Finally, the reported correlation coefficients have been characterized as low, moderate, and high by classifying the values using an arbitrary scheme where absolute values of less than (0.4) are classified as low, (0.4) to (0.6) as moderate, and greater than (.06) as high. Only components with at least moderate results in one category are included in Table 24.

Of the examined relationships, there are four components of the pilot interventions that have a moderate to high correlation with program completion: 1) the percent of students receiving career orientation more than once; 2) the percent of students receiving admissions and financial aid assistance at least once; 3) the percent of students receiving advising at least once; and 4) the percent of students receiving transportation assistance at least once.

In addition, there were two student characteristics that have a moderate to high correlation with program completion: 1) percent with no high school diploma or GED, and 2) percent less than 25 years old.

Results for the adult education pilots bear closer examination because there is greater confidence in the meaning of the rank order correlations for reasons suggested above. Among these pilots, we find that in the case of three of these relationships, the reported correlation result is greater than the correlations for student education level and age:

- Admissions and Financial Aid at least once;
- Advising at least once; and
- Transportation Assistance at least once.

The correlations for these elements are also significant at the <.05 level.

In addition, one other relationship was as strong or nearly as strong as the correlations for student education level and age: career orientation more than once.

This suggests that these pilot components have at least a similar, if not greater relationship with program completion than the educational levels of students or their ages.

Table 24. Program Components Correlated with Program Completion

Components	All Pilots	Adult Education Pilots
	Level of concurrence, (correlation value) (two-sided p value)	
Services Received:		
Career orientation more than once	Moderate (0.422) (0.1074)	**High (0.619)** (0.0715)
Admissions and Financial Aid at least once	Moderate (0.405) (0.1268)	**High (0.714)** *(0.0355)
Advising at least once	Moderate (0.501) (0.0637)	**High (0.810)** ***(**0.0163**)**
Transportation Assistance at least once	Moderate (0.535) *(0.0449)	**High (0.683)** ***(**0.0483**)**
Student Characteristics:		
Percent with no HS diploma or GED	Low (-0.333) (0.2105)	**High (-0.619)** (0.0715)
Percent less than 25 years old	Moderate (-0.460) (0.0845)	**High (-0.619)** (0.0715)

Source: Summary tables produced by the Illinois Community College Board from student-level data submitted by the pilot colleges for January 1 – December 31, 2008. Preliminary results. Reflects corrected summary values from pilot review of initial data runs. Kendall tau rank correlations obtained from Wessa, P. (2009), Free Statistics Software, Office for Research Development and Education, version 1.1.23-r3, URL http://www.wessa.net/. Low: less than 0.4 (abs value); Moderate: 0.4 to 0.6; High: above 0.6. Asterisked values are significant at the <.05 level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered for consideration by ICCB and the SG policy team. This section provides recommendations related to bridge program implementation and policy change at the local and state levels.

Recommendations Related to Policy Change

Bridge program required elements – One of the policy initiatives that resulted from the Illinois SG work is the development and implementation of a definition of bridge programs. This definition includes three required elements that Illinois bridge programs must address:

- *Contextualized instruction* that integrates basic reading, math, and language skills and industry/occupation knowledge;
- C*areer development* that includes career exploration, career planning within a career area, and understanding the world of work; and
- *Transition services* that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education or remedial coursework to credit or occupational programs.

The qualitative results shed light on all three of these program elements, showing all pilot demonstration sites employed innovative instructional approaches, with most using some form of contextualized instruction. The approaches were highly varied, with numerous reasons given to explain local variation, including the need to address local community college policies and practices, the need to serve different student populations, and the need to meet different industry sector and occupational requirements. Within the adult education model, we observed different approaches to serving highly diverse student populations, including fine tuned practices to serve sub-populations. This was readily apparent in the two adult bridge programs (Black Hawk College and McHenry County College) that enrolled a high percentage of ESL learners wherein both programs integrated instructional strategies that were highly sensitive to the language and cultural needs of the learners. In another adult bridge program (Lewis and Clark Community College), we observed that, over time, the college was moving toward a blended adult education and developmental education model, both to attract more students and to develop a sustainable model. In yet another example, we observed the employer-supported health care program offered by one college (Oakton Community College) wherein incumbent employees participated in a CNA-to-LPN bridge, drawing upon resources associated with their employee benefits.

Two sites required that students participate in a college-credit bearing course in career development, and in both cases the students and instructors commented on the importance of a strong career awareness and preparation component in the bridge curriculum. Other sites varied in the extent to which career development was offered, making it difficult to distinguish the benefits of career development from other aspects of the programs. Further, transition services and the Transition Coordinator (or Case Manager) emerged as a core component of three of the sites. Qualitative results suggest the persons hired in this position should possess extensive knowledge of diverse adult student populations and of the services offered by the college and CBOs and community agencies. Transition Coordinators play an important role in orienting, guiding, and advocating for the students, and they are critically important to coordinating support services that are sometimes disconnected and difficult to navigate within the community college.

The quantitative results provide additional support for the requirement to include career development (element 2) and transition services (element 3) in the bridge definition. The pilot demonstration projects that provided most students with career orientation, admissions assistance, and advising had better

outcome results than those that did not. Moreover, the pilot projects in which students had frequent interactions with an assigned Transition Coordinator and that provided more students with transportation assistance had better outcomes than those that did not.

These initial results deserve additional analysis now that qualitative and quantitative results are available for further review and interpretation, and these analyses are planned as part of the SG 2.0 initiative.

Data collection requirements – ICCB should consider routine data collection on the presence of a Transition Coordinator and the provision of services as collected for the SG pilots. This would allow verification of these elements of the bridge definition, and support future analysis of the contribution of these services to student success.

Recommendations Related to the Quantitative Analysis

Further analysis of student transition – In addition to program completion, the pilot projects submitted data on student entry into postsecondary credit instruction, remedial instruction and employment. These data were not sufficiently complete to support an analysis of possible relationships with pilot project characteristics. Some of the pilots were not able to collect information on student transition to postsecondary instruction, and some were not able to collect employment information. Fortunately, both of these results can eventually be obtained from matching with administrative records. ICCB should consider continuing to follow these students by accessing their postsecondary enrollment and completion records, and their UI wage records. This would help to validate the preliminary conclusions reported in this evaluation report. This type of data matching was originally envisioned as part of the SG 1.0 evaluation plan, but the timing of data submissions by the colleges, coupled with the decision to continue pilot cohorts past the period of required student data collection, rendered this part of the plan unworkable within the timeframes permitted for this report.

Pilot student record supplement – ICCB should consider requiring submission of student records from the SG pilots for the spring 2009 semester, since most pilots continued to provide bridge program instruction during this period. This information could not be obtained within the timeframe required to complete this evaluation report. Having this additional term information would provide a more complete picture of student results, including transitions to postsecondary instruction.

Recommendation Related To Future Projects

Data Collection Procedures: The specification and collection of a detailed student record data dictionary was an ambitious undertaking for the SG pilot projects. There were several lessons learned in doing this however, which may be of benefit for any future projects of this type:

- It took longer than anticipated to complete each step of the process, from creation of the dictionary, through collection and submission of the data from the colleges. This was due to limited staff resources at the state and college levels, competing priorities, and technical challenges faced by some of the colleges.
- The complexity and/or size of the request did pose a problem for many of the colleges. Most colleges had questions about how to compose the data request, or questions about particular items. Overall, however, most of the colleges seemed to be able to understand what we were asking for, and able to create the required records in a reasonably timely fashion. Not all colleges were able to collect data for all items due to the lateness of receiving the data dictionary.
- The procedure for preparation and submission of the file posed a problem for some colleges. The staff that was operating the bridge programs was not familiar with the process for record submission, so we made efforts to connect them with the IR staff, which was trained in this process. The creation of the excel workbook for collection of the data was helpful to the pilots, but it posed problems for college technical staff and ICCB in processing the files.
- We were not able to produce useful information for analysis from the student test results. It was not realistic to expect to receive useful data on pre and post test results in the absence of an enforced protocol on testing students.
- In any future pilot projects involving student record submissions, ICCB should consider instituting the following:
    - Develop the data dictionary or at least a detailed listing of required data elements prior to project initiation, and include these elements in the RFP;
    - Make acceptance of data collection requirements a condition of the grant award;
    - Make submission of complete data for pilot students (as well as any comparison students) a condition of full grant payment;
    - If test data are to be collected, enforce a standard testing protocol on all pilots;
    - If comparison data are to be collected, enforce a standard comparison group selection protocol on all pilots;
    - Allow more time for pilot projects to collect the data and submit the records;
    - Provide student-level records to the evaluators, with identifiers removed if necessary; and
    - Allow more time for analysis and discussion of results.