

Academic Year: Fall 2021-Spring 2022
IN REVIEW

GUIDING PERSISTENCE
TO SUCCESS
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

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OVERVIEW

#GPS (Guiding Persistence to Success) has been developed to make a significant positive change to the student learning environment at Albany State University. Five strategies have been identified to potentially impact retention, progression and graduation rates: progress reports, advising model, study tables, course redesign and peer mentoring. Research has shown that when early intervention models combined with learning support for high-failure classes show the greatest promise for improving student success. When these interventions are complemented by structured advising and mentoring activities, students start to build a sense of belonging at the institution. This results in improved retention and graduation rates.

1 PURPOSE	2 GOALS	3 OUTCOMES
Create opportunities for personal and professional success by impacting retention, progression and graduation rates	<p>Encourage student progression through course and degree programs</p> <p>Strengthen graduation rates</p>	<p>Decrease DFW rates in 11 high enrollment courses</p> <p>Decrease percentage of students on probation and suspension</p> <p>Increase fall-to-fall first-year retention rates</p> <p>Increase student awareness of academic policies and resources that are relevant to student progression and degree completion</p>

IMPLEMENTATION

- Continued to promote awareness of #GPS QEP
- Fully launched EAB (early alert system)
- Added more courses to Study Table
- Full implementation of redesigned course for ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102
- Piloted course redesign of BUSA 1105 and MUSC 1100
- Initiated course redesign for ENGL 2111, MATH 2411 and COMM 1110¹
- Initiated course optimization to support scheduling of 11 high enrollment courses
- Initiated common course master shells for online sections of 11 high enrollment courses

¹ Due to a faculty shortage, COMM 1110 will not be included in the redesign efforts at this time.

OUTCOMES AND FINDINGS

Course Redesign Progress | Reduction in DFW rates

Eleven courses were identified as high enrollment, high DFW rate courses; courses that often keep students from progressing within a course and/or major.

Tables One and Two outline the AY 2021-2022 DFW and Pass rates.

Average DFW and Pass Rates

Fall 2021 Average DFW and Pass Rates

Table 1

Course	Count	DFW Rate	Pass Rate
BIOL 1111K	451	28%	71.8%
BIOL 2411K	376	26.1%	73.1%
BUSA 1105	226	33.2%	66.4%
COMM 1110	289	30%	69.9%
ENGL 1101	914	44.1%	55.7%
ENGL 1102	478	36.4%	63.4%
ENGL 2111	281	39.9%	60.1%
MATH 1001	494	49.2%	49.2%
MATH 1111	556	32%	67.6%
MATH 2411	315	32.4%	67.6%
MUSC 1100	393	32.1%	67.9%

Spring 2022 Average DFW and Pass Rates

Table 2

Course	Count	DFW Rate	Pass Rate
BIOL 1111K	339	34%	65.8%
BIOL 2411K	255	31%	67.8%
BUSA 1105	134	31%	68.6%
COMM 1110	446	48%	52%
ENGL 1101	572	49%	50.6%
ENGL 1102	670	33%	66.5%
ENGL 2111	252	38%	62%
MATH 1001	263	45%	54%
MATH 1111	274	49%	51.4%
MATH 2411	409	39%	59.6%
MUSC 1100	232	31%	68.5%

In AY 2021-2022, the following courses fully implemented a redesign of a course (ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102), implemented a pilot of a redesigned course (BUSA 1105 and MUSC 1100), or made modifications to a redesigned course (MATH 1001 and MATH 1111) to be piloted in fall 2022.

In addition to tracking the DFW rate in the courses, for QEP purposes, a common assignment is used to measure the impact of the new teaching pedagogies and/or strategies used to support the redesign of the 11-high enrollment, high DFW rate courses.

English

Both ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102 were initially a part of the University System of Georgia's (USG) Gateways to Completion (G2C) initiative. This initiative "provided faculty and institutions with processes, guidance and tools to support redesign of lower division and/or developmental level courses"². In 2018, ASU was in the second cohort of institutions to implement redesign strategies supported by the G2C initiative.

The piloted courses of ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102 were launched in spring 2020. However, due to the impact of COVID-19, a full implementation of the redesigned courses occurred fall 2021.

² Strategic Academic Initiatives. (2022). University System of Georgia. Academic Affairs Division. Retrieved from https://www.usg.edu/strategic_academic_initiatives/gateways

Redesign efforts for ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102 focused on:

- **Both:** Syllabus uniformity
- **Both:** Eliminating any comprehensive exams as they do not measure student’s written skills
- **ENGL 1101:** Low-stakes writing (e.g., summary writing, discussion posts, creating and responding to open-ended discussion questions)
- **ENGL 1101:** Scaffolding the writing process
- **ENGL 1102:** Scaffolding research writing skills
- **Both:** Using a common rubric (AAC&U Written Communication VALUE Rubric, see Appendix A) to assess writing artifacts

QEP Assignment: Final Written Assignment

Instrument of Assessment: AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric

Implemented: Spring 2022

Tables Three and Four provide spring 2022 results of the collected artifacts.

Table 3: English 1101: Process Essay	4	3	2	1	0
Context of and Purpose for Writing	51	81	61	31	37
Content Development	41	75	63	39	38
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	32	76	60	38	36

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The data suggests that the peak of the overall bell-shaped curve is at the B level, so students are, overall, meeting expectations on written assignments.

Table 4: English 1102: Research Paper	4	3	2	1	0
Context of and Purpose for Writing	47	95	92	31	36
Content Development	26	89	100	45	42
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	16	87	106	47	47
Sources and Evidence	20	81	91	72	43

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The data suggests that the peak of the overall bell-shaped curve is at the B/C level, so students are, overall, meeting expectations on written assignments. The biggest weakness seems to be using source material correctly.

Math

MATH 1001 and MATH 1111 were also a part of USG’s G2C initiative. The redesigned courses were launched spring 2020. However, similar to ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102, due to the impact of COVID-19, a full implementation of the redesigned courses occurred fall 2021.

Math continues to make modifications as needed. During fall 2021, lead instructors for both courses worked with their respective committees to revise the courses based on ACMS (the

Academic Advisory Committee on Mathematical Subjects which is comprised of representatives from all institutions within the University System of Georgia) expectations.

Redesign efforts focused on

- **MATH 1111:** applications and content through word problems
- **MATH 1001:** word problems, as this is a deficient area for the students

Additionally, the revised redesign of the courses placed emphasis on skill objectives opposed to a lesson objective. This encourages increased participation on homework, which impacts performance on quizzes and exams. MATH 1001 is also using the University of West Georgia’s Open Stax OER as a supplemental resource. Math 1111 will continue to use more homework problems, Khan Academy, YouTube videos, and extra class (hands-on) activities to help students improve in the concerned areas outlined above. The revised redesign of the courses will be piloted fall 2022.

Introduction to Business

The redesign efforts of BUSA 1105 focused on the following:

- faculty should be highly experienced with teaching access students,
- creating more engaging activities that use scenarios to differentiate between major functions within the business environment,
- and developing the 21st Century skills needed for the workplace.

Implementation: Piloted Fall 2021 QEP Assignment(s)

- **Business Functions Quiz**
- **Article Summary and Connections Short Essay**
- **Team Business Presentation**
- **Issues Decision Making Study**

Instrument(s) of Assessment: Quiz and Rubrics

Tables Five and Six provide AY 2021-2022 results of the collected artifacts.

Table 5: BUSA 1105 Fall 2021 Redesign Results			
SLO	Assessment	Achieved	Findings
1	Business Functions Quiz	Yes	85% of students earned 70% or higher
2	Article Summary & Connections Short Essay	No	64% of students earned 70% or higher
3	Team Business Presentation	Yes	76% of students earned 70% or higher
4	Issues Decision Making Study	No	59% of students earned 70% or higher

Table 6: BUSA 1105 Spring 2022 Redesign Results			
SLO	Assessment	Achieved	Findings
1	Business Functions Quiz	YES	59 out of 74 students assessed (80%) earned a score of 70% or better.

2	Article Summary & Connections Short Essay	NO	41 out of 74 students assessed (55%) earned a score of 70% or better.
3	Team Business Presentation	YES	64 out of 74 students assessed (86%) earned a score of 70% or better.
4	Issues Decision Making Study	NO	30 out of 74 students assessed (41%) earned a score of 70% or better.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

It is acknowledged that students are struggling with achieving SLOs 2 and 4. Both require reading, the ability to find and evaluate useful information related to a specific topic and analyzing/summarizing skills. Any students who performed poorly on a written assignment was encouraged to work with the Writing Center to improve and resubmit the assignment. Modifications to the redesigned course—if needed—will be considered after spring 2023 with an additional emphasis on valuing the importance of completing coursework.

Music Appreciation

The concerns to address for the redesign of Music Appreciation were a combination of (1) students not being academically prepared in writing and discussion skills, and (2) students struggling with the expanse of music history, application of musical terms and active listening for specific items in music (i.e. dynamics, sound quality, and tempo).

Implementation: Piloted Fall 2021

QEP Assignment

- **Concert Report:** Supported by a Pre and Post Test (i.e., musical terms and concepts) and a Guided Concert Report (e.g., a sample review/template of a recorded performance)

Tables Seven and Eight provide AY 2021-2022 results.

Table 7: MUSC 1100 Fall 2021 Redesign Results			
Total Students	Did not Meet the Standard (below 70)	Met the Standard (70-84)	Exceeded the Standard (85+)
222	108 (56.4%)	49 (10.4%)	65 (33.1%)

Table 8: MUSC 1100 Spring 2022 Redesign Results			
Total Students	Did not Meet the Standard (below 70)	Met the Standard (70-84)	Exceeded the Standard (85+)
151	52 (34.4%)	40 (26.5%)	59 (39.1%)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Students seemed to struggle with reading comprehension and writing. Assignments requiring students to discuss and/or respond in written format seemed to cause difficulty. For both semesters, there were issues of many students not completing the Concert Report; some completing the report but not following the prescribed directions. Non-completion for some occurred because students did not know what to do or simply did not follow directions.

Recommended modifications are to update links for material included in OER materials and to update the common assignment rubrics.

Moving Forward

Although the courses are seeing some success, the DFW rate for the courses are still above the targeted 5-year benchmark of 20%, which is outlined in the Average DFW Rates of Tables One and Two (page 5). This could also be attributed to the concerning notifications regarding chronic absences, failed quizzes/exams, and/or late/missed assignments, which is detailed in the Progress Reports section (page 9).

It is with the hopes that the new student success program, University College, will influence the completion and pass rates of these courses. As a first-year student success initiative, University College uses a learning community platform that pairs one of the 11 high enrollment, high DFW rate courses with an introductory course linked to a focus area or program of support. Launched as a prototype in fall 2022, the themed learning communities focus on an interdisciplinary connection between the courses as students are engaged with activities and assignments that aim to foster student learning, interest and success in their courses, their programs of study, and their career goals.

Progress Reports | Reduction in percent on probation or suspension rates

Case Statistics (Pool: All freshmen; sophomores on probation)

AY 2021-2022 Updates

- Alerts Updated (Chronic Absence, Student Has Never Attended, Well-Being, and Individual Success Consultation Referral alerts were added)
- Early Alert process re-organized to place Student Success at center of Early Alert communication protocol.
- Student Retention Coordinator hired April 1, 2022, to exclusively coordinate Early Alert data, communication flow, and outreach
- Data has revealed that students who are identified as at-risk in Week 4 will most likely fail the course.

Table 9: EAB 2021-2022 Report			
	Total Number of Alerts	% of students with progress reports who were identified as at-risk	Top Alerts
FALL 2021	6669	52.16%	Late/Missing Assignments Failed Quiz/Exam Chronic Absences
SPRING 2022	5710	55.56%	Late/Missing Assignments Failed Quiz/Exam Chronic Absences

Table 10: Alert Categories		
Category	Number of Alerts (<i>one student may have multiple alerts</i>)	
	FALL 2021	SPRING 2022
Academic Support Referral	180	141
Alert Reason is Not Listed	128	49
Attendance/Online Alert	174	197
Chronic Absences (Concern)	1719	1438
Disposition/Attitude	4	21
Failed Quiz/Exam	1791	1642
Individual Success Consultation Referral	16	22
Late/Missing Assignments	4717	4035
No Book(s)/Missing Materials	52	22
Student Has Never Attended	170	102
Well-Being	41	40

AY 2022-2023 Plans

- Leveraging technology further to improve responsiveness to faculty.
- Focus on responsiveness and outreach in Weeks 1-3.
- Improve tracking of impact of interventions on performance.

Student Resources

Study Table | **Decrease DFW rate of high enrollment courses**

Students who attend Study Table receive help in 33 distinct courses. Study Table targets mainly freshmen and sophomores enrolled in gatekeeper and foundation courses (one or more of the 11 high enrollment, high DFW rate courses); however, juniors and seniors also take advantage of the Study Table to receive additional help from instructors. Study Table allows students to receive one-to-one support from instructors to help students improve their content knowledge and skill acquisition of a course, which influences their potential success in a course.

Below in Table 11 are the AY 2021-2022 updates.

Table 11: Study Table Results

FALL 2021					
Course	Number of Participants	Number Passing at Final	Percentage Passing at Final	Number Failing at Final	Percentage Failing at Final
MATH 1001	41	27	65.9%	14	34.1%
MATH 1111	36	25	69.4%	11	30.6%
MATH 2411	26	22	84.6%	4	15.4%
ENGL 1101	70	50	71.4%	20	28.6%
ENGL 1102	27	20	70.1%	7	25.9%

COMM 1100	18	13	72.2%	5	27.8%
BUSA 1105	14	10	71.4%	4	28.6%
BIOL 1111K	18	17	94.4%	1	15.6%
BIOL 2411K	14	10	71.4%	4	28.6%
Total	264	194	73.4%	70	26.5%
SPRING 2022					
Course	Number of Participants	Number Passing at Final	Percentage Passing at Final	Number Failing at Final	Percentage Failing at Final
MATH 1001	10	6	60%	4	40%
MATH 1111	25	19	76%	6	24%
MATH 2411	26	22	84.6%	4	15.4%
ENGL 1101	19	13	68%	6	32%
ENGL 1102	36	30	82.14%	6	17.86%
ENGL 2111	5	5	0	0	0
Total	121	95	79%	26	22%

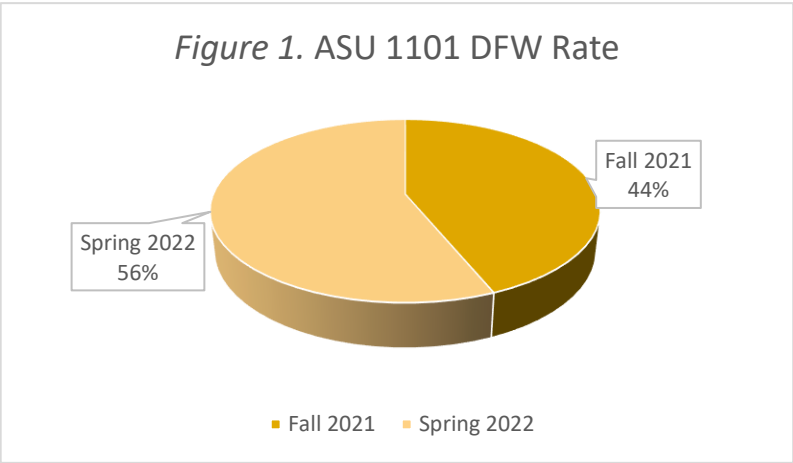
First-Year Experience (ASU 1101) | Increase awareness of policies and resources related to progression

ASU 1101 is the required course for the First Year Experience (FYE) Program that provides first-year students with information, resources, learning experiences, and support needed to successfully navigate their first year at Albany State.

At the end of the term, students are assessed on the covered topics discussed in the course. This assessment also includes questions related to campus life, resources and policies.

For AY 2021-2022, 72% of students successfully completed the campus resource assessment. However, Figure 1 outlines the DFW rate of the course, which suggests there are opportunities for improvement.

During summer 2022, a FYE Director was hired. He has extensive knowledge and experience in first-year student success programming. With his



expertise, opportunities for improvement will be focused on an enhanced design of the course centered on culturally relevant activities and events to improve student engagement and participation in the course.

Additionally, beginning fall 2022, the course will now be counted in students' GPA. As a grade counting course, it is posited that students' performance and engagement with the course will increase.

Peer Mentors | **Improve retention rate**

To assist students in finding resources available to facilitate their academic and personal success, assignments and activities were included in the course to increase students' knowledge of policies and resources related to progression. Each section of ASU 1101 also includes a peer mentor to provide additional guidance and support to students enrolled in the course.

P3 Mentors are student leaders who support first-year students with their transition to collegiate life at ASU. The suggested use of the P3 mentors to influence student persistence, currently, is not being documented consistently by ASU 1101 instructors. Currently, collected artifacts on P3 Mentors focuses on the trainings and the activities/events the P3 mentors participate/assist with throughout the semester. As the life cycle of the QEP continues, the QEP Director will work closely with the new Director of FYE to ensure the P3 mentors are actively assisting ASU 1101 instructors, especially as related to activities/discussions to encourage new students to engage with social activities and assisting students with transitioning to college life.

MODIFICATIONS

Advising Model | **Increase retention rate**

The academic advisement model was changed.

Proposed Advising Model in the QEP

- Professional Academic Advisors: students with less than 60 credit hours
 - Assist students with core curriculum requirements
 - Referrals to other support resources
- Faculty Advisors: students with 60 credit hours or more
 - Assist students with classes in major
 - Referrals to internships or research opportunities

Modified Advising Model

- **Professional Advisor I:** assigned by major for first 30 hours of coursework.
 - Assist students to ensure they are in an appropriate major for their career goals, assist with necessary major changes, and career assessments.
 - Facilitate advising and registration for assigned student populations, ensure students are connected with student support services and activities, disseminate program information, and track student performance.

- **Professional Advisor II:** Academic Advisor: assigned by major for 30+ hours through graduation
 - Facilitate advising and registration for their assigned student populations, ensure students are connected with student support services and activities, disseminate program information, track student performance and assist with initiating graduation audits.
- **Program/Campus Advisor:** specific groups or programs; all classes
 - Continues to use the current model which includes a faculty advisor at the greater than 60 credit hours mark

This modified model uses an embedded framework to support and/or address the following issues with the proposed advising model

1. a decrease in retention of upper-class students,
2. time constraints for registering currently enrolled upper-class students, and
3. the length of time to complete a degree due to incorrect/out of sequence course selections.

REFLECTIONS

Common Patterns: The following issues have been identified as areas to address to ensure continuous student improvement and success.

Reading Comprehension

Action Items

- During the Faculty and Staff Conference in August 2022, faculty presenters led workshop sessions focused on strategies for promoting “reading in the content areas,” also known as “reading across the curriculum.”
- ASU became a member of the International Literacy Association. An application has also been submitted for a student chapter.
- A Saturday Literacy Program is being designed with the assistance of a writing facilitator consultant.

Writing Skills

Action Items

- During fall 2022, the process to hire a fulltime Writing Center Coordinator in the James Pendergrast Memorial Library began.
- For AY 2023-2024, ENGL 1101 will be an anchor course in University College.
- For AY 2023-2204, it will be suggested to have a writing specialist in the ENGL 1101 sections of University College in lieu of a Learning Community Assistant.

Accountability

Student Absences and Missed Assignments: Are the DFWs a reflection of performance/learning or student accountability/engagement?

Action Items

- The planning team for University College will use data collected from the AY 2022-2023 prototype to suggest and create first-year programming for all first-year students centered on the Golden Ram Points system.
- For AY 2023-2024, sections of ASU 1101 will be piloted using a seminar framework. This will allow faculty to share their passion for research, teaching and service.

WAYS TO SUPPORT THE #GPS QEP



Make the #GPS QEP a standing item on department meeting agendas.



Give ideas to the #GPS QEP Committee on how it can better support your department or program.



Provide timely early alerts



Encourage students to use the Study Table and ALL academic support services



Encourage students to fully participate and engage with all FYE/ASU 1101 programming and activities.



Consider teaching a section of FYE/ASU 1101 and/or leading a presentation.

Quality Enhancement Plan
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www.asurams.edu/academic-affairs/college-of-arts-sciences/QEP/

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