

**URBAN COLLEGE OF BOSTON**

**TAPPING ACADEMIC POTENTIAL PROJECT**

**FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**September 28, 2012**

**Submitted by**

**Navin Associates**

**U. S. Department of Education**

**Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education**

**Special Focus Competition**

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## ***I. Acknowledgements***

This evaluation was a collaborative effort of Urban College of Boston (UCB) staff and Navin Associates, with the cooperation of the Tapping Academic Potential (TAP) students and the advice of the TAP Advisory Committee. Urban College was represented throughout the grant period by Marcelo Juica, TAP Project Director, who was a willing and upbeat partner that believed in the importance of evaluation. Dr. Hannah Gebretensae, former UCB Early Childhood Education Division Chairperson, was very involved in the first half of the project including essential contributions to the evaluation design. Other TAP staff that provided critical support to the evaluation included TAP Case Manager Carmen Pineda, Literacy Coaches Daila Davila Gonzalez and Tracy Alexander, and Data Management Consultant and English Instructor Ken Grout. UCB personnel providing support to the evaluation at various points included former UCB President Dr. Linda Turner, Dean of Enrollment Services and Registrar Henry Johnson, Director of Academic Support Services Josie Hatuey, support staff Tom Weber and Jane Dolloff, and many UCB instructors. Finally, we are especially grateful to the 54 TAP students who voluntarily participated in the focus groups and surveys. Their commitment, hard work and enthusiasm are inspiring.

Navin Associates

September 2012

## ***II. Executive Summary***

### **Project Overview**

The overall goal of the Tapping Academic Potential (TAP) project of the Urban College of Boston (UCB or the College) was to assist English Language Learners (ELLs) in UCB's Early Childhood Education (ECE) Division to complete their two-year Associate of Arts degrees and to do so in less than average time, in order to advance their careers in the field of ECE. The project proposed to accomplish this goal by improving the English literacy skills of ELL students, providing academic support services, and by addressing personal life barriers to degree completion through the provision of case management services. The TAP project was funded at \$490,120 over three years by the U. S. Department of Education under the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) Special Focus competition. The notice of award was received on October 1, 2009 and project classes began in January 2010.

### **Description of Participants**

At baseline, the majority of the respondents had the following characteristics: female; low- to low-middle income; employed; part-time student; Spanish as primary language; completion of Grade 12 outside the United States; plans to pursue an ECE career; plans to pursue an Associate Degree in ECE; not using UCB academic student support services during the prior semester; not receiving help at UCB to deal with personal obstacles; feeling less than confident about writing in English; having a goal of obtaining a Bachelor's Degree or higher.

## **Evaluation Plan**

UCB contracted with an independent, third party evaluator (Navin Associates) to provide formative and outcome evaluations. The evaluator involved TAP project management staff in a participatory process to develop the evaluation plan and data collection instruments. All instruments and protocols were approved by the New England Institutional Review Board. Fifty-four TAP students consented to enroll in the evaluation out of 94 total TAP students; the remaining 40 students were not included because they joined the project at a later date. A comparison group was used to measure key program effects. It was comprised of 30 ELL ECE students that were selected randomly from a pool of students who met the criteria for, but did not participate in, the project.

## **Results**

The evaluation plan included five overarching research questions that were based on the project's goals, objectives, outcomes and indicators. The results are presented according to those questions.

### **1. How much did the literacy level of students who participated in the TAP program improve, if at all?**

The majority of students who participated in TAP demonstrated an improvement in their literacy levels compared to baseline. In fact, 82.1% of the students who took both the pre- and the post-test (ACCULACER) demonstrated an increase in their literacy levels by at least one level compared to baseline. More than four in ten (42.9%) improved their scores by one level; 25% improved by two levels; 10.7% by three levels; 3.6% by four levels; and 17.9% did not improve by a level.

**2. Did participating students take less time to graduate than the comparison group and, if so, how much?**

Yes, TAP students took much less time to graduate than the comparison group students.

On average, TAP students took 50% less time to graduate than the comparison group.

The average time-to-degree for the TAP graduates was 4.9 years (range of two years to nine years). The comparison group had an average time-to-degree of 9.8 years (range of four years to 18 years).

**3. Did utilizing a case management approach effectively address barriers to successful academic completion and, if so, which barriers?**

Yes, case management services definitely helped students overcome personal barriers

(e.g., finding handicapped-accessible housing, accessing and applying for financial aid,

obtaining health insurance) and this helped them stay in school and complete their

degrees. The average number of instances of use per student over the course of the

project (two full years plus one semester) was 103.5 instances, with 27.4 of those

instances being individual meetings with the Case Manager. Virtually every student

utilized the case management services throughout the project.

**4. Did students who utilized academic and non-academic support services demonstrate improved performance and, if so, how much?**

Yes, TAP students utilizing support services did demonstrate improved performance in

graduation rates (compared to baseline ECE rates), rate of transfer to four-year colleges

(compared to baseline ECE rates), time-to-degree (compared to baseline ECE rates and

comparison group), literacy level (compared to baseline), and stop-out/drop-out rates

(compared to baseline ECE rates and comparison group). Every student utilized non-

academic support services and, in the first two years, over 80% of students utilized academic support services.

**5. How much did the number of students transferring to four-year colleges increase as a result of TAP, if at all?**

The TAP rate of transfer was essentially the same as the comparison group (9.3% vs. 10%), so it appears that the number of students transferring to four-year colleges did not increase as a result of TAP. The rates for both groups were more than twenty times higher than the estimated transfer rate of all ECE ELLs at baseline (0.4%), but this appears to be an artifact of the selection criteria that were used in selecting both TAP and comparison group students.

**Lessons Learned**

UCB's TAP project had at least two important effects:

- It decreased time-to-degree for Associate Degree candidates, and
- It decreased the rate of stop-out/drop-out.

This was due to the following factors.

1. Non-academic student support services
2. Academic student support services
3. Staff skills and commitment
4. The requirement to take at least two classes per semester
5. Continuity of English instructors
6. Increased English proficiency
7. Cohort model
8. Availability of bilingual staff

9. Academic and non-academic support staff flexibility in scheduling appointments
10. Good communication about students among project staff
11. Formative and outcome evaluations

Lessons about how to improve the project included, but were not limited to, the following.

1. Provide bilingual staff in all languages of participating students – All of the TAP staff spoke Spanish, but no TAP staff person spoke Chinese (Chinese).
2. Do not schedule summer classes
3. Clearly define staff roles and limit non-project responsibilities
4. Increase staff hours beyond part-time
5. Provide clinical supervisory support for Case Manager
6. Create a central database
7. Provide private space for meetings with students



### ***III. Introduction***

This introduction provides an overview of the goals of the evaluation of the Tapping Academic Potential project (TAP or the project) including a general description of the project.

#### **A. Project Overview**

The overall goal of the Urban College of Boston (UCB or the College) TAP project was to assist English Language Learners (ELLs) in UCB's Early Childhood Education (ECE) Division to complete their two-year Associate of Arts degrees and to do so in less than average time, thereby advancing their careers in the field of ECE. The project proposed to accomplish this goal by improving the English literacy skills of ELL students, providing academic support services, and by addressing personal life barriers to degree completion through the provision of case management services. The TAP project was funded at \$490,120 over three years by the U. S. Department of Education under the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) Special Focus competition. The notice of award was received on October 1, 2009 and project classes began in January 2010.

#### ***Program Model***

The original project design proposed to enroll two cohorts of part-time students (60 students total). One cohort was to be comprised of students with intermediate levels of English proficiency and the second cohort was to include students with basic English proficiency (no fundamental knowledge). Students would enroll in three

terms each year (fall, spring, and summer) for three years, taking two classes per term.

The TAP project was comprised of four major elements:<sup>1</sup>

1. Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) and Literacy across the Curriculum (LAC):

The project design specified the integration of WAC and LAC practices in the ECE content courses and in college writing courses required to complete the 66 credit two-year Associate Degree in the ECE program. This was intended to benefit all of the students in the ECE division, not just those students in the TAP project.

2. Literacy Coaching and Other Academic Support Services: TAP would provide students with individualized literacy coaching services and other academic supports to further support the development of literacy skills.

3. Case Management: A case management approach would be utilized to address students' non-academic barriers to academic and career success.

4. Advisory Committee for Language Acquisition of Adult Learners: The project would develop an Advisory Committee for Language Acquisition of Adult Learners comprised of experts in related fields that would meet regularly to: a.) function as an internal body of program evaluators, particularly focusing on language acquisition teaching practices; b.) ensure that the components and strategies of the program were effective and implemented on time, and measured in ways that would be useful for program improvement and for creating a model

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<sup>1</sup> The original proposal listed three program elements, but for evaluative purposes, they are further broken down into 4 major elements.

for national replication; c.) offer the field scholarly and applied research from the project; d.) write articles for publication to disseminate the model and add scholarship to the program and College; and, e.) provide professional development training for faculty on a contractual basis.

There were several modifications to the project design during the project period.

1. During the first year, the cohort model was modified from the original proposal. Rather than two cohorts (one cohort for students with intermediate levels of English proficiency and another for students with basic levels of English proficiency), four cohorts were created (Cohort A, B, C, & D – Cohorts A & B with intermediate/advanced levels of English proficiency and Cohorts C & D with beginner/intermediate levels of English proficiency).
2. Based on lessons learned from the first year, TAP courses were not offered during the subsequent summer terms (i.e., TAP participants did not take two courses during the summer terms, as originally proposed).<sup>2</sup>
3. Due to financial difficulties, there was considerable uncertainty about the future of UCB during the final year of the project. It was unclear whether the College would be open for the 2012-2013 academic year. Because of this uncertainty, the TAP project was forced to end as of the end of the spring 2012 term after only two and a half years, rather than the originally proposed three years.

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<sup>2</sup> The reasons behind the modification of the project to not offer TAP courses during the summer term are detailed in the *Process Evaluation* section of this report.

## **B. Evaluation Goals**

### **1. Measurable Outcomes and Indicators**

As stated in the original proposal, the measurable outcomes of the TAP project were that two cohorts of ELLs enrolled in the ECE program at UCB (i.e., the TAP participants) would a) be more likely to graduate in a timely manner, and b) graduate with the literacy skills necessary for a successful transition to careers and/or a four-year degree program. Evaluation of these outcomes was based upon the indicators that were outlined in the proposal, which included:

- a. improved level of literacy compared to baseline;
- b. improved quality of writing compared to baseline;
- c. improved course grades compared to baseline;
- d. increased utilization of academic student support services compared to baseline;
- e. increased utilization of non-academic student support services compared to baseline;
- f. decreased length of time to complete degree compared to comparison group;
- g. increased graduation rate compared to comparison group; and
- h. increased rate of transfer to four-year colleges compared to comparison group.

The evaluation also measured the extent to which the project provided materials for replication by others and the extent to which the project was likely to be continued beyond federal funding (sustainability). Indicators for these outcomes included: 1.)

presentations at conferences and publication of materials on websites and in journals; and 2.) increased non-federal funding.

## **2. Project Goals and Objectives**

The goals and objectives of the project, as well as the related activities and outcomes to be measured for each year of the project are detailed below.

**Goal 1: To increase by 50% both the proportion of ECE ELL students who graduate from the two-year Associate Degree program and who transfer to four-year colleges.**

Objective 1.1: Over the course of the project, to decrease by 40% the amount of time that it takes for 70% of students in the cohort to complete their two-year Associate Degree.

Activity 1.1.a: To improve by two levels the literacy levels of 50% of students in the cohort, compared to baseline.

Activity 1.1.b: To improve the quality of student writing by 50% compared to baseline.

Activity 1.1.c: To improve course grades of 50% of students in the cohort by Year Three.

Activity 1.1.d: To increase by 75% the number of students who use academic student support services, including literacy coaching services, as compared to Year One.

Activity 1.1.e: To increase by 50% the confidence level about writing skills for each student in the cohort compared to baseline.

Objective 1.2: To decrease by 50% the stop-out/drop-out rate of ELLs in the ECE program.

Activity 1.2.a: To decrease by 33% the proportion of students who drop out for non-academic reasons.

Activity 1.2.b: To ensure that 100% of students in the cohort develop an annual Individualized Case Management Plan (ICMP) with UCB support staff.

Activity 1.2.c: To refer 100% of students who seek support to appropriate services.

Activity 1.2.e: To increase by 75% the number of students who utilize available nonacademic student support services.

**Goal 2: To disseminate the model for replication by other institutions.**

Objective 2.1: To publish annual updates regarding project information and evaluation results on websites relevant to postsecondary education, including UCB's own website and those of its partnering organizations.

Objective 2.2: To submit at least one article for publication in a postsecondary education journal.

Objective 2.3: To make at least one presentation at a local, regional, or national conference.

**Goal 3: To sustain the project at UCB beyond federal funding.**

Objective 3.1: To increase by 20% student enrollment, thereby increasing College revenue to continue project.

Objective 3.2: To add two substantial sources of funding for the project through the College's strategic fundraising plan and Development Office.

Objective 3.3: To provide two professional development offerings per year to faculty and staff on the integration of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and Literacy Across the Curriculum (LAC) practices and other effective strategies for improving literacy skills of students.

Objective 3.4: To provide one training per year for tutors and support staff of UCB's Learning Resource Center (LRC) on developing Individualized Case Management Plans (ICMPs) with students and providing literacy coaching to students.

## ***IV. Methodology***

This section describes the evaluation plan and process.

### **A. Evaluation Plan**

UCB contracted with Navin Associates as the independent, third party evaluator to provide formative and outcome evaluations. At the outset of the project, the evaluator involved the TAP project management staff<sup>3</sup> in a participatory process to develop the TAP Evaluation Plan and data collection instruments. The TAP Advisory Committee was also consulted regarding the Evaluation Plan overall and specific methodological issues. Both the Evaluation Plan and the final instruments developed by the evaluator were reviewed and approved by the TAP project management staff.

The TAP evaluation plan developed the following five overarching research questions from the project's many proposed goals, objectives, activities, outcomes and indicators.

1. How much did the literacy level of students who participated in the TAP program improve, if at all?
2. Did participating students take less time to graduate than the comparison group and, if so, how much?
3. Did utilizing a case management approach effectively address barriers to successful academic completion and, if so, which barriers?
4. Did students who utilized academic and nonacademic support services demonstrate improved performance and, if so, how much?

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<sup>3</sup> The TAP project management staff included the ECE Division Chair and the TAP Director.



5. How much did the number of students transferring to four-year colleges increase as a result of TAP, if at all?

***IRB Involvement***

Prior to the start of services, the decision was made by TAP project management staff and UCB administrators, in conjunction with the evaluator, to submit the project to the New England Institutional Review Board (NEIRB) for review. The intent was to ensure that TAP Advisory Committee members would be able to write and publish articles using the results of the TAP evaluation in journals of postsecondary education in support of the dissemination and sustainability objectives of the project. As a result, all instruments and protocols, including the Informed Consent Form, the Evaluation Enrollment Form, and Spanish and Chinese translations of all instruments, were submitted to the NEIRB and, following a rigorous review process, approved. (Instruments attached)

The NEIRB also approved a request for waiver of consent for the TAP comparison group under the condition that all comparison group data collection was limited to de-identified academic records.

## B. Data Collection

Data were collected only for the 54 TAP students who were enrolled in the evaluation out of 94 total TAP students, unless otherwise noted. The Advisory Committee recommended that the remaining 40 students be excluded from the evaluation because they had joined the project at a later date (i.e., January 2011 and beyond) and/or replaced students who had left the project. The following methods were utilized to collect data.

1. UCB Student Academic Records: TAP staff<sup>4</sup>, with the assistance of a part-time data manager from the College, obtained data from UCB's student academic records, which provided information regarding:
  - a. Enrollment: student enrollment numbers at UCB for each year of the project period to assess increases in enrollment over the project period;
  - b. Graduation, time-to-degree, transition to four-year degree, and stop-out and drop-out rates<sup>5</sup>: for students in the project as well as ELLs and non-ELLs in UCB's Early Childhood Education Division (ECE) to provide baseline data for comparison;
  - c. GPAs: for students in the project to assess changes in course grades.

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<sup>4</sup> TAP staff includes the ECE Division Chair, TAP Director, Case Manager, and Literacy Coach.

<sup>5</sup> For purposes of the TAP evaluation, "stop-outs" were defined as students who missed one or more terms but eventually re-enrolled in classes. "Drop-outs" were defined as students who missed a term and did not re-enroll. Students who did not receive credits for the semester were also considered as "missing" that term, as they were not counted among the students who were enrolled for that semester, per UCB (June 9, 2011 meeting). During the grant period, TAP students who left school were classified as drop-outs unless they returned to school during the grant period, in which case they were re-classified as stop-outs.

2. TAP Student Records: TAP staff provided data obtained from project records. The TAP student records provided the following information:
  - a. A list of TAP students by cohort (only those students enrolled in the evaluation);
  - b. Utilization of academic student support services;
  - c. Utilization of non-academic student support services (i.e., case management services);
  - d. Reasons for stop-out/drop-out (i.e., academic or non-academic reasons).
3. Standardized Literacy Assessment Tool (i.e., ACCUPLACER<sup>6</sup>): UCB administered this standardized test for students in the project at two points in time (prior to starting the project and at the end of the project period). The results were utilized to assess changes in literacy level.
4. Diagnostic Test: UCB developed the diagnostic tests for each of the English courses offered as part of the TAP project (i.e., 096L, 097L, 100L, 101L, 111, and 112). The diagnostic tests were utilized to assess changes in quality of writing.
5. Project Participant Surveys: The evaluator developed and administered the Enrollment Information Form (pre-survey) and the Final Project Evaluation Survey (post-survey) to assess such information as career and educational goals of the students as well as their confidence level regarding their English writing abilities. Both surveys were approved by the NEIRB.

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<sup>6</sup> The ACCUPLACER WritePlacer ESL test was used.

6. **Project Participant Focus Groups:** The evaluator conducted two cycles of focus groups with the TAP participants - one in spring 2011 (March 26, 2011) and the second in spring 2012 (May 10 and 11, 2012) to gather such information as perceived effects of the project and utilization of available support services. The evaluator worked with TAP staff to recruit focus group participants utilizing flyers (Spring 2011) and direct email to students (Spring 2012). Students received a \$25 stipend for their participation. An NEIRB-approved protocol was used for the focus groups.
7. **Key Informant Interviews:** The evaluator conducted key informant interviews by telephone with the TAP Director (July 19, 2012), the Case Manager (July 18, 2012), and the Literacy Coach (July 19, 2012).
8. **Comparison Group Data:** A comparison group was identified to measure the effects of the proposed project. The comparison group was comprised of 30 ELL students in the ECE division, who were selected randomly from a pool of students who met the criteria for, but did not participate in, TAP. The criteria for selection into the TAP project and the comparison group were the same: a) completion of the four core courses in ECE that are offered in Spanish and Chinese; b) English language proficiency at either the basic level or intermediate level as determined by administration of the ACCUPLACER; c) good academic standing, i.e., C average or above; d) little to no history of drop-out/stop-out from college; e) commitment to staying in the ECE field; and f) interest in transferring to a four-year degree program. The comparison group students were identified only by their student record numbers. They did not complete surveys or participate in focus groups. All data regarding the comparison group students were obtained using their student academic records in

order to determine the following: 1.) length of time to complete a two-year Associate Degree, 2.) rate of graduation, and 3.) rate of transfer to four-year colleges.

### C. Limitations/Evaluation Challenges and Solutions

1. Incomplete data: The data for the following items were incomplete.
  - a. Diagnostic test scores: For each cohort and for each English course, there were missing pre- and/or post-test scores for the diagnostic test. Consequently, the outcome data do not provide a complete picture as they were based only on the students with both pre- and post-test scores.
  - b. ACCUPLACER scores: The original evaluation plan called for three sets of data for the ACCUPLACER, i.e., students would have a baseline ACCUPLACER score at the start of the project, a second score at the end of the second year of the project, and a final score at the end of the project. However, the ACCUPLACER was not administered at the end of the second year. Therefore, there are only two points of reference for the ACCUPLACER – one at baseline, and the second at the end of the project (i.e., June 2012). In addition, a few students did not take the second ACCUPLACER test at the end of the project, because they had already graduated.
  - c. Number of TAP graduates and transfers to four-year colleges: The project was designed to operate for three semesters (fall, spring, summer) over three years but summer sessions were cancelled after the first summer, as discussed earlier. Moreover, after two and one-half years, the project had to end early, for reasons unrelated to the project. In effect, the project was shortened by three of its nine planned

semesters (summers of 2011 and 2012 and fall 2012). At the end of the project, there were a number of TAP students who were on track to graduate in spring 2013. In addition, there were students who graduated in spring 2012 who reportedly were planning on applying to four-year colleges. None of these potential outcomes is included in the evaluation data.

2. Unavailable data: The original evaluation plan called for collecting baseline data on the number of students who dropped-out for non-academic reasons. Unfortunately, UCB does not track this data for its students overall. The TAP project tracked this data for its own students for purposes of this evaluation.
3. Small sample size: Because of the size of the program (94 students) and even smaller number of students in the evaluation (54), these results should be interpreted with caution.
4. Unrealistic goals and objectives: Some goals and objectives identified in the original proposal may have been unrealistic, having been set too high. For example, one of the goals of the project was to increase student enrollment by 20%, thereby increasing College revenue to continue the project. It is difficult to see how a small project involving less than 100 students would increase student enrollment by 20%.
5. External circumstances at UCB: During the last year of the project, the future of UCB as an institution was uncertain due to financial difficulties faced by the College. The project was forced to end after only two and a half years, rather than the full three years as planned.

## V. Findings

This section presents the findings from the process evaluation and the outcome evaluation.

### A. Descriptive Statistics

A total of 94 students were recruited for the project. Of these 94 students, a total of 54 students (all women) participated in the TAP evaluation.<sup>7</sup> The average age of these students was 42.1 years. Based on UCB data, 78% of students at the College have annual incomes below \$20,000; 95% of students are working full-time while taking classes; and many of the students are single parents. The table below presents demographic information by cohort for the TAP participants.

**Table 1. Demographic Information by Cohort**

	<b>Cohort A (17 total students)</b>	<b>Cohort B (13 total students)</b>	<b>Cohort C (11 total students)</b>	<b>Cohort D (13 total students)</b>
Semester Joined and Initial Course Level	Spring 2010 097L	Spring 2010 100L	Summer 2010 097L	Fall 2010 096L <sup>8</sup>
# Spanish-speaking in Evaluation	13	10	10	12
# Chinese-speaking in Evaluation	4	3	1	1

<sup>7</sup> The remaining 40 students in the TAP project were not included in the evaluation as they had joined the project at a later date (i.e., January 2011 and beyond) and/or replaced students who had left the project.

<sup>8</sup> Students in Cohort D started at a level below the beginner-level English class as their English language skills were not quite developed enough at the time they joined the project. TAP staff created a new class (096L) to accommodate these students to prepare them with the necessary skills required to take the 097L class.



The following data are from the Project Evaluation Enrollment Information Form.

At baseline, the majority of the respondents indicated the following.

- Spanish as their primary language
- Completion of Grade 12 in a country other than the United States
- Plans to pursue a career in Early Childhood Education
- Plans to pursue an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education
- No use of academic student support services during the semester prior to starting TAP
- No receipt of help from someone employed at UCB to deal with personal obstacles to succeeding at UCB during the semester prior to starting the TAP project
- Feeling less than confident about their English writing abilities
- Having an education goal of obtaining a Bachelors Degree or higher.

The tables below present select data from the Project Evaluation Enrollment Information Forms.

**Table 2. Question 10: Primary Language (spoken at home, with family & friends)**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Spanish	42	77.8%
Chinese	8	14.8%
Other*	4	7.4%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>0</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

\*Includes: “Chinese and English” (1) and “Spanish and English” (3)

**Table 3. Question 11.a: What is the highest grade in school that you finished?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Grade 6	1	1.9%
Grade 8	1	1.9%
Grade 10	1	1.9%
Grade 11	2	3.9%
Grade 12/HS	29	55.8%
BA	6	11.5%
GED	3	5.8%
Other*	9	17.3%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>2</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

\*Includes: 2 years of university, University, 4<sup>th</sup> Year, College, Secretarial School

**Table 4. Question 12.a: Do you plan on pursuing a career in Early Childhood Education? (check one)**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	49	94.2%
No	0	0%
Unsure	3	5.8%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>2</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

**Table 5. Question 13: Do you plan on earning an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education at UCB? (check one)**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	52	96.3%
No	0	0%
Unsure	2	3.7%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>0</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

**Table 6. Question 14: Do you plan on earning a Bachelors Degree after UCB?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	40	78.4%
No	0	0%
Unsure	11	21.6%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>3</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

**Table 7. Question 16: Last semester, how many times did you use academic support services at UCB (e.g., tutors from LRC<sup>9</sup>) (circle one)**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
More than 10 times	0	0%
7-10 times	1	1.9%
4-6 times	2	3.8%
2-3 times	3	5.7%
1 time	0	0%
Not at all	47	88.7%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>1</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

**Table 8. Question 17: Last semester, how many times did someone employed at UCB help you deal with a personal obstacle to succeeding at UCB (e.g., finances, child care, housing, transportation, health, family, personal)? (circle one)**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
More than 10 times	1	1.9%
7-10 times	0	0%
4-6 times	1	1.9%
2-3 times	7	13.5%
1 time	5	9.6%
Not at all	38	73.1%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>2</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

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<sup>9</sup> Learning Resource Center

**Table 9. Question 18: How confident are you about your ability to write in English?  
(circle one)**

	Frequency	Percent
Not confident	16	30.8%
Somewhat confident	23	44.2%
Confident	10	19.2%
Very confident	3	5.8%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>2</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

**Table 10. Question 19: What is your educational goal? (check all that apply)<sup>10</sup>**

	Frequency	Percent
ECE Certificate	4	7.4%
CDA Credential <sup>11</sup>	5	9.3%
Associate degree	12	22.2%
Bachelors degree	16	29.6%
Masters degree	8	14.8%
Doctoral degree	9	16.7%
Other	0	0%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>0</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

<sup>10</sup> This table represents the highest degree desired indicated on Question 19.

<sup>11</sup> “Child Development Associate” national credential

**Table 11. Question 20: How confident are you that you will reach your educational goal? (circle one)**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Not confident	0	0%
Somewhat confident	3	5.9%
Confident	24	47.1%
Very confident	24	47.1%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Missing</i>	<i>3</i>	
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	

## **B. Process Evaluation**

The TAP project successfully accomplished a number of activities that it set out to do.

1. Student Recruitment: TAP staff recruited 94 students total for the TAP project – 34 more than originally proposed. However, due to the timing of the recruitment, only 54 of the 94 students were enrolled in the evaluation.
2. Non-academic Student Support Services (Case Management Services): The Case Manager reached out to 100% of the students in the project to offer resources and assistance to help students address any life barriers that may have affected their ability to stay in school and complete their degrees. All of the 54 students in the evaluation met in-person with the Case Manager and utilized the services offered. Feedback from students in focus groups was overwhelmingly positive regarding the case management services. Students stated that they knew that they could call up the Case Manager if they ever needed help with anything and that she would help them.
3. Academic Student Support Services: TAP students had access to academic student support services that included individual support provided by the Literacy Coach, access to tutors, and individual academic plans that were developed with each student. Focus groups feedback indicated that the services were beneficial and helped them to do better in school.

The TAP project also faced some challenges in accomplishing its planned activities.

1. Advisory Committee Meetings: The Advisory Committee did not meet on a quarterly basis as intended according to the project workplan. Staff reported that this was due to demands on the time and energy of the TAP staff for non-project UCB matters. For example, the ECE Division Chairperson, who oversaw the project and was primarily responsible for the Advisory Committee, also served as Interim Academic Dean for most of the project period and left UCB in January of 2012. The Advisory Committee was convened three times during Year One (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters), once during Year Two, and not at all during the last 2 quarters of the project (i.e., January – June 2012). By the end of the project, TAP staff felt that the Advisory Committee had been somewhat helpful, but did not really play the intended role. However, there were some examples of value added by the Advisory Committee to the project. For example, the Sustainability Subcommittee helped to obtain funding for the project and the Research and Academics Subcommittee was helpful in providing advice and resources regarding both the evaluation design and the academic aspects of the project.
2. Staff Turnover: Academic support services were provided during each year of the project. However, the number of students utilizing the services decreased from baseline, rather than increasing as originally planned. This may have been because students did not require as much academic support as their English language skills improved. However, a second factor may be the high turnover rate in the Literacy Coach position. The first Literacy Coach left after only a few months (March 2010). The second Literacy Coach left as of January 2012. The



- third Literacy Coach was with the project through the remainder of the project (i.e., January 2012 – June 2012) at a reduced number of hours (25 hours/week vs. 35 hours/week) due to UCB budgetary considerations.
3. WAC/LAC Implementation: TAP faculty and other ECE faculty did not implement WAC/LAC strategies in their classroom teaching. One training was provided for faculty at the end of Year Two regarding various WAC/LAC strategies used in other settings. According to key informant interviews with project staff, faculty did not fully understand how to implement WAC/LAC strategies in their own classrooms and there was no opportunity for follow-up after the training.
  4. Professional Development Trainings: The project did not provide two professional development trainings per year for faculty and staff as originally proposed, but did provide six overall (four in Year One, two in Year Two, and none during the last semester of the project). The project provided only two of three planned trainings for LRC tutors and staff.
  5. Recruitment of Chinese students: The project was not able to meet the goal of recruiting at least 5 Chinese students for each cohort, despite the assistance of an intern, who was fluent in Chinese.<sup>12</sup> TAP project management analyzed the possible reasons why more Chinese students didn't sign-up for the project and concluded the following.
    - Most ELL students in college need ongoing encouragement and support from someone in their community. The TAP project was not able to provide this

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<sup>12</sup> Only nine Chinese students enrolled in the evaluation (of the nine, three left the project). There were four additional Chinese students who enrolled in the project, but were not included in the evaluation.

kind of support for Chinese students for most of the first half of Year One due to turnover in staff (a Chinese-speaking staff member was available at the start of the project, but she left after only a couple of months). Chinese-speaking interns were brought on board later during Year One to provide tutoring support and were well-utilized.

- The project design did not sufficiently account for the lower English proficiency level of UCB's Chinese students, which resulted in recruiting students for the project who did not meet the English proficiency criterion. Also, the Chinese language (both spoken and written) has less in common with the English language than does the Spanish language. Therefore, it can be more challenging for Chinese students to transition to classes taught completely in English. Ultimately, TAP project management created a new lower-level English class (096L) and successfully recruited Chinese students for the 096L class which started in fall 2011.

6. Summer semester: The decision to not offer TAP classes during the summer was a change from the original workplan to help students graduate with their Associate Degrees in less time by offering TAP classes year-round for three years (i.e., spring, summer, and fall terms). Although TAP classes were not offered during the summer, TAP students had access to all of the project's support services. Based on the following lessons learned from providing summer TAP classes during Year One of the project, TAP staff decided that summer classes would not be offered in Year Two.

- Many students return to their countries of origin for extended periods during the summer and are unavailable.
- The children of many students are at home during the summer.
- TAP staff found that it was very stressful for students to take two classes over the abbreviated eight week summer semester – which translated to classes two nights a week, plus an all-day Saturday class, plus homework for two classes. It was particularly difficult for students who struggled with English to have to absorb so much in such a short period of time.

## C. Outcome Evaluation

### 1. Outcome Data

This section presents the baseline and outcome data collected for all students in the TAP project evaluation during the period January 2010 – June 2012. As noted earlier, the data will be presented for students in the TAP evaluation as a whole, unless otherwise noted.

The data presented for the TAP students in this section represent the 54 students who were enrolled in the evaluation, including the students who stopped-out or dropped-out.<sup>13</sup> As of the end of the project, there were:

- 32 active students (including 1 stop-out who returned to the project after a hiatus) – these students were present in TAP during the final semester of the project (i.e., spring 2012), including 14 students who graduated in June 2012;
- 3 graduates in 2011;
- 4 stop-outs<sup>14</sup>;
- 16 drop-outs.

The data are presented below by project goals and objectives. Conclusions and discussion are presented in the following section.

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<sup>13</sup> There were a total of 94 students participating in the TAP project, however only 54 of those students were enrolled in the evaluation. The remaining students joined the project at a later date and/or took the place of a student who dropped-out and, as such, were not included in the evaluation.

<sup>14</sup> One of the stop-outs returned to TAP; the other three stop-outs re-enrolled at UCB, but did not return to TAP.

**Goal 1: To increase by 50% both the proportion of Early Childhood Education (ECE) English Language Learner (ELL) students who graduate from the two-year Associate Degree program and who transfer to four-year colleges.<sup>15</sup>**

Graduation rate: The graduation rate for TAP students was 31.5%, a rate 7.5 times higher than the baseline graduation rate of ECE ELLs (4%) and just over 6 times higher than that of non-ELLs (5%).<sup>16</sup> The project far exceeded the goal of increasing the graduation rate by 50%. However, the TAP graduation rate was only slightly higher than the graduation rate of the comparison group (30%).

Transfer to four-year college: The rate of post-graduation transfer to four-year colleges for TAP students was 9.3%, a rate that was 23.3 times higher than the baseline rate for ECE ELLs (0.4%) and 4.6 times higher than the baseline rate for non-ELLs (2%). Again, the project far exceeded the goal of increasing the rate of transfer to four-year colleges by 50%. In this case, the comparison group had a slightly higher rate of transfer to four-year colleges than the TAP students (10% vs. 9.3%).

Objective 1.1: Over the course of the project, to decrease by 40% the amount of time that it takes for 70% of the students in the cohort to complete their two-year Associate Degree.

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<sup>15</sup> Baseline data for both ELLs and non-ELLs in the ECE Division over a five-year period (2004-2005 academic year to 2008-2009 academic year) were collected to assess graduation rates, rates of transfer to four-year colleges, and time-to-degree. Data for students in the TAP project were collected to assess graduation rates, rates of transfer to four-year colleges, time-to-degree, literacy levels, quality of writing, course grades (GPAs), use of academic student support services, and student confidence levels about their writing skills.

<sup>16</sup> In addition to the TAP students who graduated with an Associate Degree, 29 TAP students also obtained their ECE Certificates.

Time-to-degree: Outcome data indicated that 76.5% of the TAP graduates completed their two-year Associate Degrees in five years or less. The average time-to-degree for the TAP graduates was 4.9 years, a 41% decrease from the 8.3 year average time-to-degree for ECE graduates overall at baseline (6.9 years for ELLs and 9.5 years for non-ELLs<sup>17</sup>). The average time-to-degree for the comparison group graduates was 9.8 years. The project exceeded this Objective for both ELLs and the comparison group.

*Activity 1.1.a: To improve by two levels the literacy levels of 50% of students in the cohort, compared to baseline.*

Literacy levels: Literacy levels were assessed using a standardized test (i.e., ACCUPLACER). The table below presents the distribution of both baseline and outcome ACCUPLACER scores for the students in the TAP evaluation.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> UCB staff were interested to learn that ECE ELLs at UCB graduated in considerably less time on average than native English-speaking students.

<sup>18</sup> Students receive a computer-generated score for the ACCUPLACER between “no score” and “6”. Students are placed in courses based on their scores as follows: 1 – 096L “Transition to English”, 2 – 097L Reading and Writing Skills I ESOL, 3 – 100L Reading and Writing Skills II ESOL, 4 – 101L Introduction to Academic Writing, 5 – 111 College Writing 1, 6 – 112 College Writing 2.

**Table 12. Literacy Levels (ACCUPLACER Scores)**

ACCUPLACER Score	Baseline		Outcome	
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
ESOL	16	30.77%	0	0%
096L	10	19.23%	4	14.29%
097L	19	36.54%	9	32.14%
100L	6	11.54%	9	32.14%
101L	1	1.92%	3	10.71%
ENG 111	0	0%	3	10.71%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	52 Students <sup>19</sup>	100%	28 Students <sup>20</sup>	100%

The table below presents the improvement in literacy levels for the 28 students who took the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACCUPLACER compared to baseline. Fully 82.1% of these 28 students improved by at least one literacy level. More than four in ten (42.9%) improved their scores by one level; 25% improved by two levels; 10.7% by three levels; 3.6% by four levels; and 17.9% did not improve by a level. The benchmark of 50% of students improving by two levels was not met.

<sup>19</sup> ACCUPLACER scores were missing for two of the 54 students.

<sup>20</sup> Students were not able to take the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACCUPLACER at the end of Year Two/beginning of Year Three as originally intended. Therefore, the evaluation compared the baseline to only one additional data point administered at the end of the project (i.e., June 2012), rather than two as originally planned. 28 of the 32 active students as of June 2012 took the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACCUPLACER.

**Table 13. Improvement in Literacy Levels (ACCUPLACER Scores)**

<b>Number of Levels Improved</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
0 Levels	5	17.86%
1 Level	12	42.86%
2 Levels	7	25%
3 Levels	3	10.71
4 Levels	1	3.57
Total # of Students:	28	100%

*Activity 1.1.b: To improve the quality of student writing by 50% compared to baseline.*

Quality of writing: Quality of writing was determined by diagnostic tests (pre- and post-tests) routinely developed by UCB and administered in class at the beginning and end of each English course (096L through ENG 112). This analysis was based on only the students for whom there are both pre- and post-test scores, which are indicated below for each course. The diagnostic tests were scored on a 100 point scale. Overall, the project did not improve the quality of student writing by 50% compared to baseline for the majority of the students in the project (22 of the 54 students did improve their quality of writing by 50% compared to baseline in at least one course). However, this outcome was somewhat challenging to evaluate as the diagnostic tests were different for each course. As such, there was no clear baseline pre-project score compared to a post-project score. In addition, each student showed varying degrees of improvement from course to course (in some cases, student scores decreased from pre- to post-test).



**Table 14. Quality of Writing for Cohort A by Course<sup>21</sup>**

	<b>096L</b>	<b>097L (14 of 17 students)</b>	<b>100L (14 of 16 students)</b>	<b>101L (12 of 13 students)</b>	<b>ENG 111 (9 of 12 students)</b>	<b>ENG 112 (11 of 11 students)</b>
Average Change in Score	N/A	4.6	10.9	16.6	-3.9	9.5
Median Change in Score	N/A	8.5	10.0	17.0	-5.0	10.0
Average % Improvement	N/A	6%	20%	42%	-5%	17%
Median % Improvement	N/A	11%	17%	42%	-8%	17%

**Table 15. Quality of Writing for Cohort B by Course**

	<b>096L</b>	<b>097L</b>	<b>100L (13 of 13 students)</b>	<b>101L (10 of 13 students)</b>	<b>ENG 111 (10 of 12 students)</b>	<b>ENG 112 (12 of 12 students)</b>
Average Change in Score	N/A	N/A	13.8	4.1	11.7	2.1
Median Change in Score	N/A	N/A	8.0	4.0	11.5	3.5
Average % Improvement	N/A	N/A	33%	8%	44%	3%
Median % Improvement	N/A	N/A	13%	6%	23%	6%

<sup>21</sup> Cohorts were organized by level of English proficiency. Cohorts A & B were the intermediate/advanced-level groups and Cohorts C & D were the beginner/intermediate-level groups.

**Table 16. Quality of Writing for Cohort C by Course**

	<b>096L</b>	<b>097L (9 of 10 students)</b>	<b>100L (7 of 9 students)</b>	<b>101L (4 of 7 students)</b>	<b>ENG 111 (3 of 4 students)</b>	<b>ENG 112</b>
Average Change in Score	N/A	15.1	8.1	2.8	6.7	N/A
Median Change in Score	N/A	22.0	6.0	4.0	11	N/A
Average % Improvement	N/A	47%	15%	6%	21%	N/A
Median % Improvement	N/A	35%	9%	7%	34%	N/A

**Table 17. Quality of Writing for Cohort D by Course**

	<b>096L (11 of 14 students)</b>	<b>097L (10 of 13 students)</b>	<b>100L (9 of 11 students)</b>	<b>101L (7 of 8 students)</b>	<b>ENG 111</b>	<b>ENG 112</b>
Average Change in Score	42.3	-2.6	24.4	-0.3	N/A	N/A
Median Change in Score	38.5	0.0	13	10.0	N/A	N/A
Average % Improvement	132.9%	0.4%	59.7%	2.4%	N/A	N/A
Median % Improvement	70.9%	0.4%	14.5%	15%	N/A	N/A

*Activity 1.1.c: To improve course grades of 50% of students in the cohort by Year Three.*

**GPA:** Course grades (GPAs) were determined by a review of students’ academic records. The average baseline GPA for the students in the TAP evaluation was 3.45 out of 4.0, with a median GPA of 3.46. Outcome data indicated that the average GPA for TAP students at the end of the project period was 3.33, with a median of 3.34. Compared to baseline, 27.8% of TAP students demonstrated an improvement in their GPAs. Therefore, the benchmark for this Activity was not achieved. The table below

presents the distribution of GPAs for the students in the TAP evaluation at baseline and outcome.

**Table 18. Course Grades (GPAs)**

GPA	Baseline		Outcome	
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
3.5 and higher	17	31%	17	31%
3.0 – 3.49	29	54%	27	50%
2.5 – 2.99	7	13%	9	17%
2.0 – 2.49	1	2%	1	2%
TOTAL:	54 Students	100%	54	100%

*Activity 1.1.d: To increase by 75% the use of academic student support services, including literacy coaching services, as compared to Year One.*

Data for use of academic student support services was determined through a review of the Individual Support Records. The types of academic services utilized by students included tutoring, individual meetings with the Literacy Coach, completing Individualized Learning Goals and Planning forms with the Literacy Coach, and receiving referrals to tutoring services. In Year One of the project, 83% (45 of 54) of the students in the TAP evaluation utilized academic student support services. The average instances of use per student were 4.5, with a median of 3.0. In Year Two, 82% of students (32 of 39) utilized academic student support services, with 3.3 average instances of use and a median of 3.0. During the final semester of the project (i.e., spring 2012), 34% of active students (11 of 32) utilized academic student

support services, with 5.5 average instances of use and a median of 2. This Activity benchmark was not achieved.

*Activity 1.1.e: To increase by 50% the confidence level about writing skills for each student in the cohort compared to baseline.*

Baseline confidence levels (pre-test) about English writing skills were determined through Question 18 (“How confident are you about your ability to write in English?”) on the Project Evaluation Enrollment Information Form that was completed in her native language by each student at the beginning of the project. The same question on the Final Project Evaluation Survey (post-test) was used at the completion of the project or at the time of departure for graduating students. Fifty-three percent of the students who completed the Final Evaluation Survey indicated an increased level of confidence regarding their English writing skills compared to baseline. However, fewer than 50% of the students in the evaluation completed the Final Evaluation Survey. As such, it is challenging to determine whether this Activity benchmark was achieved or not. In addition, the goal statement of a 50% increase in confidence level for every student was very ambitious. The table below presents the baseline and outcome confidence levels of students regarding their English writing skills.

**Table 19. Confidence Level about English Writing Skills**

Confidence Level	Baseline		Outcome	
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Very Confident	3	5.8%	0	0%
Confident	10	19.2%	12	70.6%
Somewhat Confident	23	44.2%	3	17.6%
Not Confident	16	30.8%	2	11.8%
TOTAL:	52 (out of 54)	100%	17 (out of 35)	100%

Objective 1.2: To decrease by 50% the stop-out/drop-out rate of ELLs in the ECE program.

For purposes of the TAP evaluation, “stop-outs” were defined as students who missed one or more terms but eventually re-enrolled in classes.<sup>22</sup> “Drop-outs” were defined as students who missed a term and didn’t re-enroll. During the grant period, TAP students who left school were classified as drop-outs unless they returned to school during the grant period, in which case they were re-classified as stop-outs.

UCB historical data gathered from student enrollment records, which were used as baseline for this evaluation, indicated that for the ECE Division overall, 27% of

<sup>22</sup> Students who did not receive credits for the semester were also considered as “missing” that term, as they were not counted among the students who were enrolled for that semester, per UCB (June 9, 2011 meeting).

students stopped-out and 65% of students dropped-out.<sup>23</sup> The stop-out and drop-out rates for ELLs were 31% and 64%, respectively. The project exceeded the double objectives of reducing the ECE ELL stop-out rate and drop-out rate by 50%, and did better in both cases than the comparison group. The table below presents the breakdown for stop-outs/drop-outs in the TAP project compared to baseline and the comparison group.

**Table 20. Stop-outs and Drop-outs**

	<b>TAP Students</b>	<b>ECE ELLs</b>	<b>Comparison Group</b>
<b>Stop-out Rate</b>	7.4%	31%	13.3%
<b>Drop-out Rate</b>	29.6%	64%	40%

*Activity 1.2.a: To decrease by 33% the proportion of students who drop-out for non-academic reasons.*<sup>24</sup>

In total, 12 of the 16 students who dropped-out of the TAP project did so for non-academic reasons. Non-academic reasons for drop-out included maternity leave, traveling out of the country, issues with immigration, career change, and medical issues. The proportion of students who dropped-out for non-academic reasons increased over the course of the project and, therefore, this Activity benchmark was not met. The table below presents the proportion of students who dropped-out of the project over the course of the project period.

<sup>23</sup> Baseline data were gathered to assess the stop-out/drop-out rate for both ELLs and non-ELLs in the ECE division for students enrolled between Spring 2003 and Fall 2005.

<sup>24</sup> The original TAP Evaluation Plan included the collection of baseline data for the proportion of ECE ELL students who drop-out for non-academic reasons to assess any changes in this rate due to the TAP project. Unfortunately, baseline data for this were not available as UCB does not track this information.

**Table 21. Students Who Dropped-out for Non-Academic Reasons**

	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two &amp; Spring 2012</b>	<b>Overall</b>
# of Drop-outs	7	9	16
# of Non-Academic Reason for Drop-out	4	8	12
% of Non-Academic Reason for Drop-out	57.1%	88.9%	75%

*Activity 1.2.b: To ensure that 100% of students in the cohort develop an annual individualized case management plan (ICMP) with UCB support staff.*

At the end of the project period, 97.3% of all students in the TAP evaluation (52 of 54) had an ICMP. 100% of the students who were active at the end of the project period had an ICMP. This Activity benchmark was achieved.

*Activity 1.2.c: To refer 100% of students who seek support to appropriate services.*

By the end of the project period, 100% of TAP students requested and received referrals to nonacademic services, according to case management records. This Activity benchmark was achieved.

*Activity 1.2.d: To increase by 75% the number of students who utilize available non-academic student support services.*

Case management records indicated that 98% of students (53 out of 54 students in the evaluation) utilized case management services at some point during the first year of

the project.<sup>25</sup> By the end of the project period, 100% of TAP students who were active in the project at the time were utilizing case management services. These services included assistance with applying for financial aid; referrals to housing, health insurance, and family resources services; and workshops (e.g., Resume and Cover Letter workshop). The project did not achieve this Activity benchmark, because virtually every student utilized the project's non-academic support services during the first year of the project, so it was impossible to increase the number of students using services by 75%.

**Goal 2: To disseminate the model for replication by other institutions.**

Objective 2.1: To publish annual updates regarding project information and evaluation results on websites relevant to postsecondary education

A page for the TAP project was included on the new UCB website. During Year Two of the project, TAP was featured in UCB's Annual Report to funders and community stakeholders.<sup>26</sup> There were no updates published during the last semester of the project. This Objective was partially achieved.

Objective 2.2: To submit at least 1 article for publication in a postsecondary education journal.

No articles were submitted for publication in a postsecondary education journal during the course of the project. This Objective was not achieved.

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<sup>25</sup> The Case Manager reportedly reached out to the one student who had not utilized services during the first year, but had not had any in-person contact with her during that year.

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.urbancollege.edu/documents/2011\\_UCB\\_Annual\\_Report.pdf](http://www.urbancollege.edu/documents/2011_UCB_Annual_Report.pdf)



Objective 2.3: To make at least one presentation at a local, regional, or national conference.

TAP staff far surpassed this Objective by presenting at local and regional conferences throughout the project period. UCB hosted its annual Early Childhood Education Conference in April 2010, with the conference focus being *Language in Transition*. TAP staff participated in a panel discussion on English Language Learners and Language Acquisition. Over 200 students, including all 30 TAP participants, and ECE professionals attended this conference. In April 2010, TAP staff presented at the CAYL (Community Advocates for Young Learners) Institute. TAP staff discussed English Language Learners and the TAP model, strategies, and the logic model for the project. In May 2010, the TAP Director presented at the Statewide Conferences on English Language Learners in Out of School Time.<sup>27</sup> Strategies, the logic model, and the workplan for TAP were shared with over 30 out of school time and ECE practitioners in Western Massachusetts. In June 2010, the TAP Director presented at the Statewide Conferences on English Language Learners in Early Childhood Literacy.<sup>28</sup> Over 40 ECE professionals attended and learned about the TAP project. The ECE Division Chairperson participated on a panel at the first statewide meeting of the Wheelock College ELL project in April 2011 (approximately 100 attendees). She presented on the TAP project goals, objectives, progress and outcomes to-date.

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<sup>27</sup> This training was organized by the Latino After School Initiative (LASI) and the Boston Children's Museum, as part of the After School and Out-of-School Time grant funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

The ECE Division Chairperson also participated in the Sixth Annual Community Dialogue on Early Education and Care: Developing New Leadership and Alliances Working for Solutions conference in May 2011. She co-led a discussion on access to higher education for ELL practitioners. During May 2011, the TAP Director delivered an online webinar entitled *Supporting English Language Learners* as part of a project with the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership (MAP). Twenty out-of-school time participants logged on to participate in this webinar. The TAP Director provided a presentation for approximately 100 out-of-school time organizations in Peabody, MA on the TAP project and working with bilingual children. The TAP Director and the Literacy Coach presented for the Kids-only Afterschool Programs and the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership on the TAP project on May 4, 2012.

**Goal 3: To sustain the project at UCB beyond federal funding.**

Objective 3.1: To increase by 20% student enrollment, thereby increasing College revenue to continue project.

The baseline data for UCB student enrollment as of the spring 2010 session (i.e., January 2010) was 583 students. Outcome data indicated that there were 499 students registered as of January 2012. This Objective was not met, but it is difficult to see how such a small project ever could have had this effect.

Objective 3.2: To add 2 substantial sources of funding for the project through the College's strategic fundraising plan and Development Office.

TAP project management staff actively sought out additional funds for the project to supplement TAP's academic and student support services (e.g., tutors, materials and curriculum, improvements to technology, and improvements to the Learning Resource Center). UCB received \$200,000 from the Barr Foundation over three years to support the TAP project. A portion of these funds was set aside to fund a tutor who would provide support solely to the students in the TAP project. In addition, UCB was awarded \$44,000 by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care's (EEC) Educator Provider Support 2012 grant program to be used for professional development and courses in early childhood education, contract courses, and coaching and mentoring of ELL ECE students. The TAP model was included in the grant as a coaching and mentoring mechanism for ELL students in the EEC Professional Development Regions. The Objective was achieved, although by project management staff rather than by other Urban College staff.

Objective 3.3: To provide two professional development offerings per year to faculty and staff on the integration of WAC and LAC practices and other effective strategies for improving literacy skills of students.

Four professional development opportunities were offered for faculty and staff in Year One (January 2010 - December 2010). Two professional development opportunities were provided in January 2010; the first was the English Department meeting (attended by 17 faculty members in the English Department) which focused on the following: assessment and language acquisition and

discussion of TAP strategies to work with ELL students. The second was a college-wide Faculty Institute (English Acquisition, Assessment & Grading and Integration of Technology Practices) attended by 25 faculty members, which focused on the use of technology to manage the classroom and the curriculum. A training offered in April 2010 focused on using online web spaces to share curriculum and calendars, and to increase communication with students. There was a specific focus on the integration of technology for English Language Learners. Ten faculty members attended with each faculty member also working on an online syllabus for their classes. Finally, an ECE Bilingual Faculty Meeting was held in June 2010, attended by seven faculty, which focused on the following: courses offered for Chinese- and Spanish-speaking students; alignment of the TAP project for future courses; recruitment of Chinese-speaking students for the fall TAP cohort; and linking TAP goals and strategies in native-language instruction.

During Year Two of the project, all TAP faculty and UCB English faculty attended a training in January 2011 during which a discussion took place regarding the process of integration of WAC and LAC practices into the curriculum, and assessment of those practices. In October 2011, the TAP Literacy Coach provided a day-long Faculty Institute on WAC/LAC strategies. There were no professional development offerings during the final semester of the project. The Objective's total proposed number of professional development offerings (six) was met, although not at a rate of two per year.

Objective 3.4: To provide one training per year for tutors and support staff of UCB's Learning Resource Center (LRC) on developing ICMPs and providing literacy coaching to students<sup>29</sup>

During Year One, a meeting of all UCB student support staff – including Learning Resource Center (LRC) staff, financial aid staff, the Director of Academic Support Services, the Director of Institutional Advancement, the Library and Information Resource Specialist, and the English Coordinator – was held to present the TAP project to the group. The group discussed TAP practices and possible ways to integrate them more broadly into the College. During Year Two of the project, a training was provided for LRC tutors on use of the new forms that were developed by the TAP staff to be used with students. No professional development offerings were provided during the final semester of the project. The annual Objective was met during the two full years of the project.

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<sup>29</sup> TAP project management indicated during a meeting with Navin Associates on June 9, 2011 that LRC tutors and staff would not be involved in developing ICMPs with students and, therefore, that portion of this objective did not apply. As such, the TAP Evaluation evaluated only the trainings related to providing literacy coaching.

## 2. Focus Group Findings

The evaluator conducted two cycles of focus groups with TAP students – the first cycle in March 2011 and the second cycle in May 2012. For each cycle, two groups were conducted. One group was for the students who were at an intermediate/advanced level in the TAP project (students in Cohorts A and B) and the second group was for students who were in the beginner/intermediate level of classes in the TAP project (students in Cohorts C and D).<sup>30</sup>

Overall, the focus group participants had very positive feedback regarding the TAP project and their experiences during the project. All of the students stated that the project had helped them to improve their English and to be more confident. They reported that confidence that they gained as a result of their improved English skills helped them in their jobs in early childhood education, especially in communicating, both verbally and in writing, with the parents of the children with whom they worked. Most of the students also felt that the project was helping them to graduate with their Associate Degree sooner than if they were not participating in the project. Students felt that part of the reason for this was that the project pushed them to take more classes per semester. They stated that the staff and instructors in the project were very helpful, reached out to the students to offer them help, pushed the students to work hard, were accessible, and did everything possible to keep the students in school. The students had extremely positive comments about the Case Manager and the case management services provided through the project.

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<sup>30</sup> For the spring 2011 focus group for beginner/intermediate-level students, the evaluator conducted the focus group with Spanish interpretation (a Chinese interpreter for this group was not necessary as there were no Chinese students who participated in this group). TAP staff indicated that there was no need for an interpreter for the beginner/intermediate-level focus group conducted in spring 2012 as all of the students were supposed to be at a level of proficiency to understand and respond to the questions in English.

For example, one student with a physically challenged child shared that the Case Manager had helped her to find a home that was accessible for her and her child. Many students related that the Case Manager assisted them with their financial assistance applications and helped them to find scholarship opportunities to pay for their classes. Students also greatly appreciated the academic assistance that they received through the project's Literacy Coach as well as tutors. The availability of tutoring on Saturdays as well as weekdays was an important benefit to the students as many of them were not able to utilize the tutoring services during the week due to work and family obligations.

One particular strength of the project that was specifically identified by the students in the intermediate/advanced-level groups was the continuity of having the same instructor for their English classes as they advanced through the project. These students felt that this allowed them to build a level of comfort with the instructor and allowed the instructor to get to know them and to focus the lessons on areas in which the students needed more work. Conversely, one particular challenge identified by the students in the beginner/intermediate-level groups was the fact that, while they liked their current instructors, they were frustrated by the fact that they had had a new English instructor every semester and did not have the chance to build a level of comfort with the instructor before moving on to the next class and a new instructor.

A challenge that was identified by both the beginner/intermediate-level groups and the intermediate/advanced-level groups was the need for more Chinese tutors – specifically, a Cantonese-speaking tutor. A Mandarin-speaking tutor was available, but many of the Chinese students were Cantonese-speaking and were not able to obtain help from the one Chinese tutor.

Other suggestions for improvement of the project included:

- More opportunities to practice speaking and pronunciation (e.g., a conversation group);
- More private tutoring spaces (currently, tutoring is provided in UCB's Learning Resource Center, which is a small room with many activities happening simultaneously);
- Having TAP-specific tutors, since there is a demand for the tutors shared between TAP students and the rest of the students at UCB;
- Requiring students to purchase only those books that the teachers will use.

All of the students in both cycles of focus groups recommended continuation of the project, as well as opening up the project to students in other (non-English) language groups (besides just Spanish and Chinese).



### **3. Key Informant Interviews**

The evaluator conducted one cycle of formal key informant interviews via phone with the TAP Director, Case Manager, and Literacy Coach in July 2012. These supplemented on-going conversations with TAP staff that took place via phone conversations, e-mail and in-person meetings throughout the course of the project. The findings below are based on one or more key informant interviews.

#### **Perceived strengths of the project:**

- Cohort model – students being able to go through the project with their peers in each cohort created a sense of peer support and enhanced student learning. The cohort model also made it easier for TAP staff to track student progress and communicate with students.
- Availability of bilingual staff – providing support to students in their own languages was an important aspect of the project.
- Case management services – having these non-academic services available to students was a key success of the project. The Case Manager was very clear about her role and students were clear about what kind of help she could provide and how to access that help.
- Literacy coaching services – providing individual academic advisement and creating student academic plans to help students stay on track for graduation was an important aspect of the project.
- Flexibility of scheduling – in addition to regular office hours for both the Case Manager and the Literacy Coach, students had the flexibility to make individual

appointments outside of those regularly scheduled hours in order to accommodate their schedules.

- Communication between TAP staff – staff indicated that there was good communication between staff regarding students.
- Communication between the evaluator and TAP staff – having access to written records of their meetings with the evaluator, as well as interim reports and other feedback from the evaluator was helpful and provided good insights. In addition, communication of clear timelines/deadlines and what was required for the evaluation provided accountability and helped the TAP staff to focus on what data needed to be collected.

**Perceived challenges of the project:**

- UCB staff roles not clearly defined – TAP staff (specifically, the Director and the previous Literacy Coach) were often pulled away from TAP to work on college-wide activities unrelated to TAP and were unable to devote their full attention to the TAP project.
- WAC/LAC – there was not enough focus or effort put into integrating and implementing WAC/LAC strategies in the classroom. TAP staff did not have a solid understanding of the strategy and were not able to provide training on WAC/LAC strategies until the end of the second year of the project. The TAP Director felt that the WAC/LAC strategy was not integral to the success of TAP.

- Delayed start-up of project – there was feedback that the project took too long to start-up following the award notice and, therefore, was not able to accomplish as much as it could have.
- Limited staff hours – both the Case Manager and the Literacy Coach were part-time on the TAP project. The Case Manager, in particular, felt that she did not have sufficient hours to provide adequate services to all 94 of the students in the project (not just those in the evaluation).
- Lack of clinical supervisory support for Case Manager – both the TAP Director and the Case Manager felt that additional clinical supervisory support would have been helpful to the Case Manager who had to handle some complicated cases involving mental health issues.
- Lack of a central database – there was no central database for keeping track of all of the data for the project. This made it challenging for staff to be able to run reports, and access the most up-to-date data from one central location. It also took time away from providing services to students because of the need to spend time creating individual spreadsheets and tracking systems.
- Lack of adequate, private space for meetings with students (for case management and literacy coaching services).
- Unrealistic expectations of what the project would be able to accomplish – the project goals were initially set too high with some being unrealistic (e.g., that case management services would necessarily be able to keep students in school).
- Advisory Committee – the Advisory Committee was not utilized to its full potential in support of the project.

- External circumstances at the College – the uncertainty of the future of the College affected the end-date for the project and its ability to achieve some goals – e.g., increasing rate of transfer to four-year college, dissemination of the model, writing an article for submission to journals of postsecondary education.
- Communication between the evaluator and TAP students – TAP staff felt that having the evaluator communicate directly with students to recruit students for the first focus group did not work well, because the students were not familiar with the evaluator and also lacked the language skills needed to communicate effectively. Staff felt that the recruitment for the second cycle of focus groups worked better when TAP staff recruited the students.
- Meetings - better advance planning for meetings (e.g., Advisory Committee meetings) and more regular TAP staff meetings about students were needed.
- Lack of formal introduction of new Literacy Coach – there was no formal introduction of the new Literacy Coach to students, so there was some initial confusion by students regarding where to go for academic support following the departure of the previous Literacy Coach.

**TAP staff recommendations for the future:**

- The project would benefit by having four full-time positions – Director, Case Manager, Literacy Coach, and Career Specialist.
- Include a specific component to connect students with jobs in the early childhood field.

- More separation of TAP project from the College (e.g., being on a separate floor) so it was clear who the TAP students were and who could access the TAP services.
- Be more specific about the qualifications for the Literacy Coach, i.e., someone who has a background in adult learners who are ELLs in the context of ESOL preparation.

## **VI. Discussion**

This section will focus on the outcomes of the project as related to the five overarching research questions identified in the *Methodology* section.

### Research questions:

1. How much did the literacy level of students who participated in the TAP program improve, if at all?

The majority of students who participated in TAP demonstrated an improvement in their literacy levels compared to baseline. In fact, 82.1% of the students who took both the pre- and the post-test (ACCULACER) demonstrated an increase in their literacy levels by at least one level compared to baseline. More than four in ten (42.9%) improved their scores by one level; 25% improved by two levels; 10.7% by three levels; 3.6% by four levels; and 17.9% did not improve by a level.

The project goal of increasing the literacy levels of 50% of the students by two or more levels was not met; only 39.3% of students did so.

2. Did participating students take less time to graduate than the comparison group and, if so, how much?

TAP students took much less time to graduate than the comparison group. On average, TAP students took 50% less time to graduate than the comparison group students. The average time-to-degree for the TAP graduates was 4.9 years (range of two years to nine years). The comparison group had an average time-to-degree of 9.8 years (range of four years to 18 years).

It is interesting to note that this area and Stop-out/Drop-out rates were the two areas in which TAP students performed markedly better than the comparison group students. By contrast, the comparison group students had nearly the same rate of graduation as the TAP students (30% vs. 31.5%) and more comparison group students transferred to four-year colleges than TAP students (33.3% vs. 29.4%). The fact that TAP students stopped-out and dropped out less and graduated sooner appear to be due to their receiving academic and case management services through the project. The academic services helped students to stay on track toward graduation by: a) providing them with an academic plan clearly outlining what they needed to do to graduate; encouraging them to take at least two courses per semester; and c) providing Literacy Coaching and tutoring services to assist with schoolwork. The case management services helped students avoid and overcome barriers to staying in school by providing guidance, information regarding resources and assistance to access those resources. Another factor that supported student persistence and shorter time-to-degree was the cohort model of the project. Focus groups and key informant interviews indicated that the cohort model resulted in peer support and positive peer pressure to progress through the courses together as a group.

3. Did utilizing a case management approach effectively address barriers to successful academic completion and, if so, which barriers?

Qualitative data from both the focus groups and the key informant interviews demonstrated that the case management services definitely helped students to overcome personal barriers and this helped them to be able to stay in school and

complete their degrees. The students enthusiastically reported that the case management services were extremely valuable and that these services (e.g., finding handicapped-accessible housing, accessing and applying for financial aid, obtaining health insurance) helped them to stay in school. The average number of instances of use per student over the course of the project (two full years plus one semester) was 103.5 instances<sup>31</sup>, with 27.4 of those instances being individual meetings with the Case Manager. Unlike academic support services, it appears that the need for this service did not decline over the course of the project, but remained constant – virtually every student utilized the case management services from the beginning to the end of the project (98% of students utilized the services in Year One; 100% of students utilized the services in Year Two and the last semester of the project).

There were some barriers which could not be overcome even with the help provided through the case management services, resulting in some students having to drop-out of school (e.g., deportation, health issues).

4. Did students who utilized academic and non-academic support services demonstrate improved performance and, if so, how much?

Every student in the TAP project utilized non-academic support services and, during the first two years of the project, over 80% of students utilized academic services. As reported earlier, data indicate that TAP students did demonstrate improved performance in the following areas: graduation rates (compared to baseline ECE rates), rate of transfer to four-year colleges (compared to baseline ECE rates),

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<sup>31</sup> “Instances of use” were based on the Case Manager’s log and included all contacts from email notices to group workshops and one-on-one meetings.



time-to-degree (compared to baseline ECE rates and comparison group), literacy level (compared to baseline), and stop-out/drop-out rates (compared to baseline ECE rates and comparison group). In addition, as stated earlier, over 80% of students who took a pre- and post-test demonstrated an improvement in their literacy levels by at least one level.

5. How much did the number of students transferring to four-year colleges increase as a result of TAP, if at all?

As stated earlier, the rate of transfer to four-year colleges was 23.3 times higher for the TAP students than the rate of ECE ELLs at baseline (9.3% vs. 0.4%). Based on that, it would appear that the TAP project had a marked impact on the rate of transfer to four-year colleges for the project participants compared to the overall ECE ELL population.

However, it is not clear that the number of students transferring to four-year colleges increased as a result of TAP. The TAP rate of transfer was roughly the same as the comparison group (9.3% vs. 10%). It is possible that the higher rates of transfer of TAP students and the comparison group were due to the fact that both groups were selected using the same criteria. The criteria required a certain level of demonstrated academic success and ambition and particular career interest (i.e., having completed the first four core ECE courses in their native language, English proficiency at either the basic or intermediate level, good academic standing, little to no history of drop-out/stop-out from college, commitment to staying in the ECE field, and interest in transferring to a four-year degree program).

Process evaluation questions:

1. How do TAP stakeholders use inputs and engage in specific activities to meet desired performance benchmarks?

Many performance benchmarks were met as reviewed earlier. For example, case management was one area of particular note where it was clearly evident that the inputs and activities contributed to meeting the desired performance benchmarks.

On the other hand, the TAP Advisory Committee was not able to be utilized to its fullest potential, according to key informant interviews. Due to the loss of the principal investigator (ECE Division Chairperson), there was a missed opportunity to fully engage the Advisory Committee to help meet performance benchmarks, such as taking part in writing an article for submission to a journal of postsecondary education.

2. Do TAP activities produce desired outputs (e.g., students utilizing the available academic and non-academic services)?

As related to case management services, it is clear that that TAP activities did, in fact, produce the desired output of students utilizing the services (100% of students utilized the case management services). Qualitative data from focus groups and key informant interviews indicates that the case manager consistently made great efforts to reach out to the students (via phone, email, in-person) to let them know that she was available to them to provide assistance and resources. In addition, the Case Manager was intentional in offering flexibility around scheduling of appointments so that students could meet with her around their schedules.

However, TAP activities related to academic services did not produce the desired output of an increase in the number of students who utilized academic services by the end of the project, even though related outcomes (e.g., shorter time-to-graduation) were achieved. TAP staff suggested that the original assumption that students should increase their use of academic services the longer they were in the project was misguided. Several students in the focus groups indicated that they weren't utilizing the academic services as much during the final semester of the project, with one reason being that they were more comfortable with the schoolwork (possibly due to the improvement in their English skills over the course of the project).

3. Does the project meet performance benchmarks/timelines?

The project met many of its performance benchmarks (please refer to the *Findings* section of this report for specifics).

One of the primary activities that was not accomplished as intended was the integration of WAC/LAC practices in courses required for completion of the ECE degree. A training on WAC/LAC rubrics and strategies utilized by other institutions around the country was provided to faculty at the end of Year Two of the project. However, there was no follow-up to ensure that WAC/LAC practices were actually being integrated into courses. Key informant interviews revealed that TAP staff lacked a clear understanding of why this particular activity was included as a primary activity of the project and how it was related to helping students succeed.

There were several performance benchmarks which were not met (e.g., improvement in course grades, increase in utilization of academic services, increased

confidence level about writing skills). In some of these cases, the original benchmark may have been unrealistic (e.g., to increase by 50% the confidence level about writing skills for each student in the cohort compared to baseline). In other cases, the measure may have been flawed (e.g., in the case of GPAs, the relatively high starting GPAs of the students were based on native-language courses and the outcome measure was based on GPAs of the students who were now taking courses entirely in English).

4. Do TAP leaders use process (formative) data to adjust project design?

TAP leaders did use process data to adjust the project design. For example, feedback from the first cycle of focus groups (during Year Two) indicated that students wanted more flexibility in scheduling time with tutors. This was communicated to project staff by the evaluator. Students reported during the second cycle of focus groups (during Year Three) that the tutors were more flexible and better at meet the students' scheduling needs, including the addition of tutoring services on Saturday.

## ***VII. Lessons Learned***

Building on its experience serving ELLs, the College developed a project for ELLs in ECE that had two important effects:

- decreasing time to Associate Degree completion and,
- decreasing the rate of stop-out/drop-out.

This was due in large part to the project's non-academic and academic student support services. These and other factors are discussed below.

1. Non-academic student support services - Case management played a significant part in helping students overcome personal barriers to their academic goals, according to students and project staff. The Case Manager was very clear about her role and students were clear about how to access her help and what she could provide, for example, help with housing, health insurance, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities.
2. Academic student support services - Tutoring, literacy coaching, and academic advisement, including the development of individual academic plans, were important components of the project and helped students achieve their academic goals. These services helped students to “navigate” through the College's systems, to know what classes they needed to take, and to stay on track for graduation. Students greatly appreciated the help of the project's Literacy Coach and tutors; their availability on both Saturdays and weekdays was important to the students, most of whom had work and family obligations.

3. Staff skills and commitment - Students stated that the staff and instructors in the project were very helpful, reached out to offer them help, pushed them to work hard, were accessible, and did everything possible to keep the students in school.
4. Two classes per semester -- Students felt that the project helped them to graduate sooner because the project pushed them to take a minimum of two classes per semester.
5. Continuity of instructors - Having the same instructor for their English classes as they advanced through the project was identified by the students in the intermediate/advanced-level groups as a particular strength of the project. Conversely, students in the beginner/intermediate-level groups who did not have the same instructor identified that as a challenge.
6. Increased English proficiency – Students stated that the project had helped them to improve be more confident in English, both verbally and in writing.
7. Cohort model – Four cohorts created a sense of peer support and enhanced student learning, according to students and staff. The cohort model also made it easier for TAP staff to track student progress and communicate with students.

TAP staff identified the following as contributing to project success.

8. Availability of bilingual staff – Providing support to students in their own languages was an important aspect of the project, although more Chinese-speaking staff were needed.

9. Flexibility of scheduling – In addition to regular office hours for both the Case Manager and the Literacy Coach, students had the flexibility to make individual appointments at other times in order to accommodate their schedules.
10. Communication about students – Staff indicated that there was good communication between staff regarding students.
11. Formative and outcome evaluation – Written reports, meeting minutes and other feedback from the evaluator were helpful and provided good insights. Clear timelines and expectations reinforced staff accountability for data collection

Lessons about how to improve the project included the following.

1. Need for bilingual staff in all languages – Students made clear that the project needed to do better in addressing the linguistic needs of the Chinese students. All of the TAP staff spoke Spanish, and there was no TAP staff person who spoke to the Chinese students in their native language, after the early departure of the one staff person who did so. There was one Chinese tutor available, but this tutor only spoke Mandarin, so was not accessible to the Cantonese-speaking students.
2. Do not schedule summer classes - Expecting students to enroll in classes for three terms (i.e., year-round) was too ambitious. As discussed earlier in the *Process Evaluation* section, students struggled with TAP courses during the summer term, due to reasons such as: traveling back to their countries of origin for extended periods of time; having young children at home during the summer; and not having enough time within an intensive, abbreviated summer term to absorb so much information.

3. Clearly define and limit staff roles– TAP staff (specifically, the Director and the previous Literacy Coach) were pulled away from TAP to work on college-wide activities unrelated to TAP.
4. WAC/LAC – Much less attention was given to the WAC/LAC strategy than originally designed. The TAP Director felt that it was not integral to the success of the project. In hindsight, it is impossible to know whether it would have been better to fully implement the strategy or to drop it altogether and redirect those resources to more direct student support.
5. On-time start-up of project – Some staff felt the project took too long to start-up following the award notice and, therefore, was not able to accomplish as much as it could have.
6. Increase staff hours – Both the Case Manager and the Literacy Coach were part-time on the TAP project. The Case Manager, in particular, felt that she did not have sufficient hours to provide adequate services to all 94 of the students in the project (not just those in the evaluation).
7. Provide clinical supervisory support for Case Manager – Both the TAP Director and the Case Manager felt that additional clinical supervisory support would have been helpful for handling some complicated cases involving mental health issues.
8. Create a central database – There was no central database for keeping track of all of the data for the project. This made it challenging for staff to be able to run reports, and access the most up-to-date data from one central location. It also took time away from providing services to students because of the need to spend time creating individual spreadsheets and tracking systems.



9. Provide adequate, private space for meetings with students (for case management and literacy coaching services).
10. Be more realistic about expectations of what the project would be able to accomplish – some project goals were initially set too high.

### ***VIII. Areas for Further Research***

The following are possible areas for further research.

1. TAP students and comparison group students had similar rates of graduation and transfer to four-year colleges, both of which were much higher than non-TAP ECE ELL students. This would appear to be because the six selection criteria used for both TAP students and comparison group students resulted in their having an increased likelihood of academic success in ECE (i.e., having already completed the first four core ECE courses in their native language; English proficiency at either the basic or intermediate level; good academic standing; little to no history of drop-out/stop-out from college; commitment to staying in the ECE field; and interest in transferring to a four-year degree program.). An area for possible research is whether TAP-like services would improve the graduation and transfer to four-year college rates of students who do not meet similarly high criteria.
2. TAP students had markedly better stop-out/drop-out rates and time-to-degree rates than the comparison group. Future research may be able to determine the relative efficacy of the academic and non-academic services, or whether it is necessary to offer both in order to lower stop-out/drop-out rates and time-to-degree.
3. Further research would be needed in order to determine the extent to which a student's starting level of English proficiency may affect project impact.
4. Literacy levels of students rose, but not uniformly. That is, most students improved by one ACCUPLACER level, but there were a few students who

improved by three or four levels and other students who did not improve at all.

This project was not able to investigate possible reasons for this.

5. Students who had the same English instructor throughout the project indicated that this was a very valuable aspect of the project for them. They were able to build a comfort-level with the instructor, who was able to get to know the students well enough to understand what they needed to focus on to improve their English proficiency. Conversely, those students who did not have the same consistency of instructors indicated that they wished that they could have had the same English instructor from course to course. Further research might demonstrate how much of an impact having a consistent instructor has on student successes, if any.