

College Success Skills Report: 2012-2013
 Southwest Texas Junior College
Executive Summary

| Students successfully completing the College Success Skills course (COLS) should attain. . . | <i>Section</i> | Partly Attained | Fully Attained |
|---|--|---|---|
| Goal 1: Higher course completion rate and GPA's in the first semester than students who did not enroll in and students who did not successfully complete COLS | <i>First Semester Student Outcomes</i> |  | |
| Goal 2: Higher course completion rates and GPA's in their most recent semester than similar students who did not enroll in or who did not successfully complete COLS | <i>Most Recent Semester Student Outcomes</i> |  | |
| Goal 3: Higher cumulative course completion rates and GPA's than similar students who did not enroll in or did not successfully complete COLS | <i>Cumulative Student Outcomes</i> |  | |
| Goal 4: Higher retention rates than similar students who did not enroll in or did not successfully complete COLS | <i>Student Retention</i> | |  |
| Goal 5: Higher completion rates in gateway courses than similar students who did not enroll in or did not successfully complete COLS | <i>Gateway Course Completion Rates</i> | |  |
| Goal 6: Student mastery levels will improve from pre- to post-test for all course objectives. | <i>Pre- and Post-COLS Assessments</i> | |  |

Note: In some cases, especially after the first semester, non-COLS students achieved higher average GPA's than their cohorts who did not enroll in COLS. When interpreting this finding, it is important to take retention into account. Successful COLS completers were retained at substantially higher rates than their non-COLS cohorts. As a consequence, the average GPA's of the non-COLS students are based upon those students who managed to continue in school despite lacking the resources provided by COLS. This smaller group would consist of the students with higher abilities and/or more favorable circumstances, who are therefore likely to make higher grades than the students who dropped out.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13

About COLS

The college success skills course (COLS) was implemented at SWTJC beginning in Fall 2008. In this initial offering, COLS was a one-semester-hour course. Upon the request of faculty teaching the course, COLS was revised to a three-semester-credit-hour course beginning in Spring 2009.

COLS includes a student orientation, so those students who take the COLS course do not also enroll in orientation. COLS is required for all first-time-in-college (FTIC) students who require remediation in at least two subject areas. Students meeting these criteria are referred to as “COLS-liable students.” Other students may enroll in COLS if they choose to do so. Only COLS-liable students are included in this report.

The group of primary interest in this report comprises those students required to enroll in COLS who completed it successfully (“Successful in COLS”). Some students who were expected to enroll in COLS did not do so. These students are used as a comparison group (“No COLS”). Students who enrolled in COLS but did not successfully complete it were used as a second comparison group (“Not successful in COLS”). Students who took COLS at a later date were incorporated into all analyses except the first-semester outcomes. Thus, all these analyses include both students succeeding in COLS in their first semester AND students successfully completing COLS at a later time in the successful group. Likewise, students who took COLS later but were not successful were assigned to the not-successful group rather than the non-COLS group.

The report is organized into six sections: (1) First Semester Student Outcomes, (2) Most Recent Semester Student Outcomes, (3) Cumulative Data, and (4) Retention, (5) Gateway Course Completion, and (6) Results of Pre- and Post-COLS Assessments.

Questions or Comments?

More details regarding the data herein are available upon request from the Office of Institutional Planning & Research. Additional data on different measures can also be made available. Please contact Julie Thomas (extension 4180 or jethomas@swtjc.edu) for assistance.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13

Section 1: First Semester Student Outcomes

Goal 1: Students successfully completing the College Success Skills course (COLS) should attain higher course completion rate and GPA's in the first semester than students who did not enroll in and students who did not successfully complete COLS

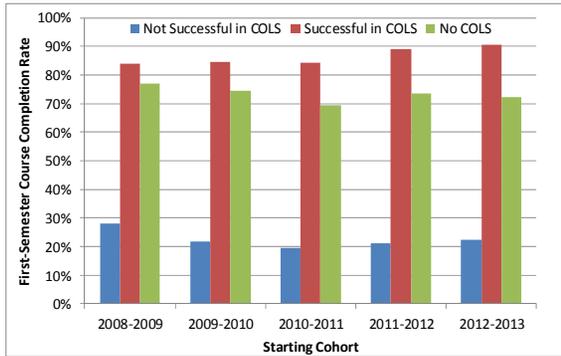


Figure 1A. First-Semester Course Completion Rate by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

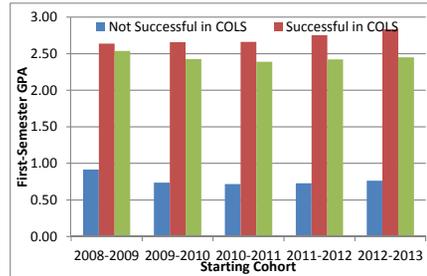


Figure 1B. First-Semester GPA by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

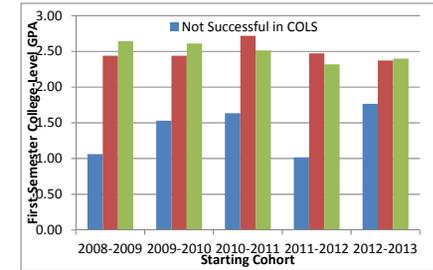


Figure 1C. First-Semester College-Level GPA by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

Table 1. Number of Students in Each Cohort by First-Term COLS Outcome

| First-Term COLS Outcome | 2008-2009 | | 2009-2010 | | 2010-2011 | | 2011-2012 | | 2012-2013 | |
|-------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| No COLS | 482 | 56% | 516 | 57% | 466 | 56% | 243 | 38% | 253 | 44% |
| Successful in COLS | 255 | 29% | 268 | 29% | 252 | 30% | 276 | 43% | 219 | 38% |
| Unsuccessful in COLS | 131 | 15% | 129 | 14% | 118 | 14% | 125 | 19% | 102 | 18% |
| Totals | 868 | 100% | 913 | 100% | 836 | 100% | 644 | 100% | 574 | 100% |

Findings: This section includes first-term data for the FTIC cohorts from Fall 2008 through Spring 2013. The course completion rate is the percentage of enrolled semester credit hours that each student completed during the particular semester. The overall GPA is that obtained for all coursework taken that semester, and the college-level GPA is that obtained for college-level courses taken that semester.

COLS students outperformed the comparison groups except for college-level GPA in some cohorts. This measure is based on a smaller number of students because not all students took college-level courses in their first term, and many who did took only a few hours.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13

Section 2: Most Recent Semester Student Outcomes

Goal 2: Students successfully completing the College Success Skills course (COLS) should attain higher course completion rates and GPA's in their most recent semester than similar students who did not enroll in or who did not successfully complete COLS.

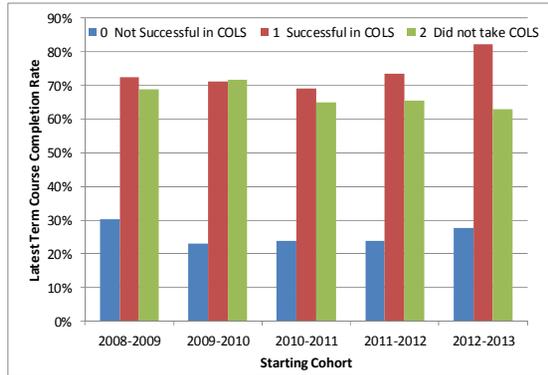


Figure 2A. Latest-Semester Course Completion Rate by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

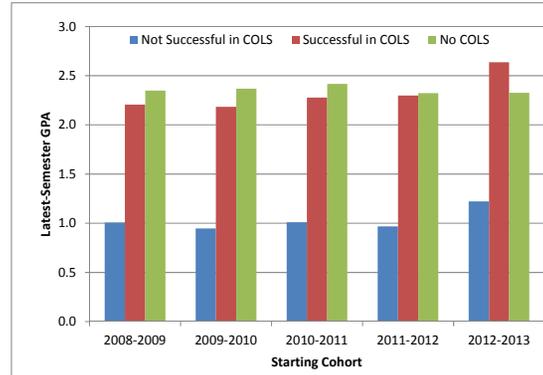


Figure 2B. Latest-Semester GPA by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

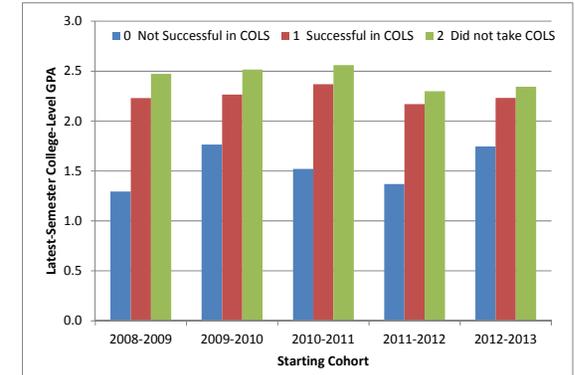


Figure 2C. Latest-Semester College-Level GPA by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

Table 2. Number of Students in Each Cohort by COLS Outcome

| COLS Outcome | Academic Year Starting Cohort | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| | 2008-2009 | | 2009-2010 | | 2010-2011 | | 2011-2012 | | 2012-2013 | |
| Successful in COLS (first term) | 256 | 30% | 270 | 30% | 251 | 30% | 276 | 43% | 223 | 39% |
| Not Successful in COLS (first term) | 80 | 9% | 101 | 11% | 90 | 11% | 82 | 13% | 74 | 13% |
| Successful in COLS (later term) | 83 | 10% | 96 | 11% | 82 | 10% | 64 | 10% | 46 | 8% |
| Not Successful in COLS (later term) | 61 | 7% | 59 | 6% | 62 | 7% | 60 | 9% | 56 | 10% |
| No COLS (to date) | 387 | 45% | 388 | 42% | 350 | 42% | 164 | 25% | 177 | 31% |
| Total | 867 | 100% | 914 | 100% | 835 | 100% | 646 | 100% | 576 | 100% |

Findings: This analysis expands the successful COLS group to include students who took COLS at a later date rather than in their first semester. In some cases the non-COLS students outperformed the COLS students on GPA; see the retention section for further discussion of this.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13

Section 3: Cumulative Student Outcomes as of the Most Recent Semester of Enrollment

Goal 3: Students successfully completing the College Success Skills course (COLS) should attain higher cumulative course completion rates and GPA's than similar students who did not enroll in or did not successfully complete COLS

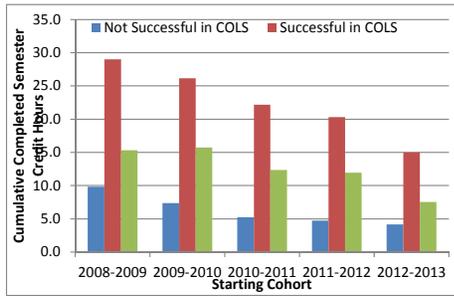


Figure 3A. Cumulative Completed Semester Credit Hours by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

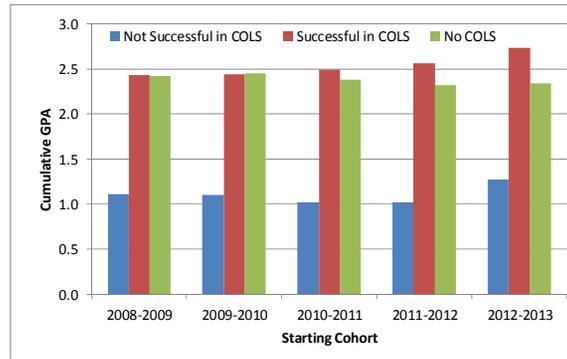


Figure 3B. Cumulative GPA by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

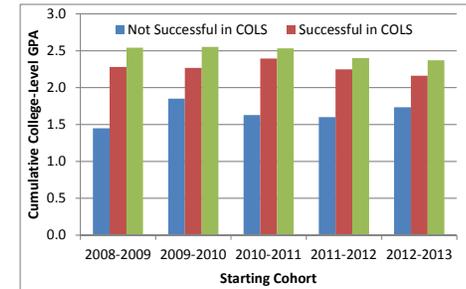


Figure 3C. Cumulative College-Level GPA by COLS Outcome for COLS-Liable Students

Table 3. Number of Students in Each Cohort by COLS Outcome

| COLS Outcome | Academic Year Starting Cohort | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| | 2008-2009 | | 2009-2010 | | 2010-2011 | | 2011-2012 | | 2012-2013 | |
| Successful in COLS (first term) | 256 | 30% | 270 | 30% | 251 | 30% | 276 | 43% | 223 | 39% |
| Not Successful in COLS (first term) | 80 | 9% | 101 | 11% | 90 | 11% | 82 | 13% | 74 | 13% |
| Successful in COLS (later term) | 83 | 10% | 96 | 11% | 82 | 10% | 64 | 10% | 46 | 8% |
| Not Successful in COLS (later term) | 61 | 7% | 59 | 6% | 62 | 7% | 60 | 9% | 56 | 10% |
| No COLS (to date) | 387 | 45% | 388 | 42% | 350 | 42% | 164 | 25% | 177 | 31% |
| Total | 867 | 100% | 914 | 100% | 835 | 100% | 646 | 100% | 576 | 100% |

Findings: This cumulative data section (section 3) includes information paralleling the single-semester sections: cumulative completed semester credit hours, cumulative GPA, and cumulative college-level GPA. In some cases the non-COLS students outperformed the COLS students on GPA; see the retention section for further discussion of this.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13

Section 4: Retention

Goal 4: Students successfully completing the College Success Skills course (COLS) should be retained at higher rates than similar students who did not enroll in or did not successfully complete COLS

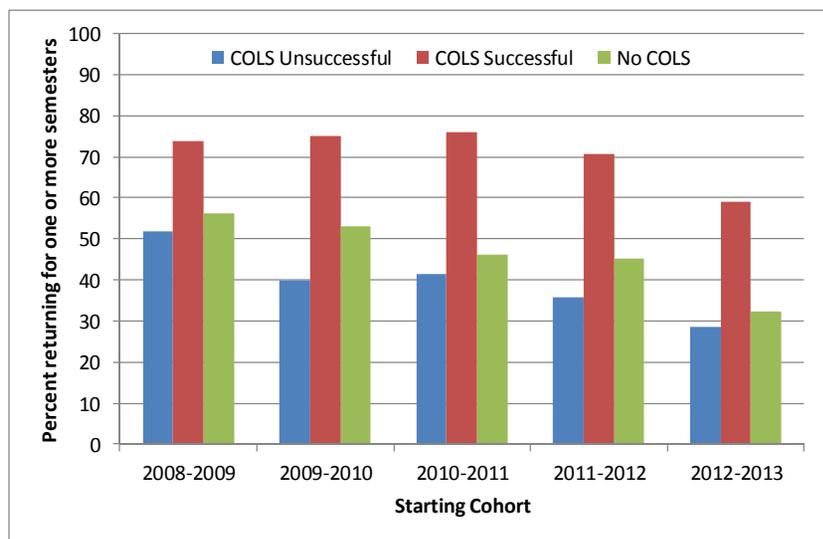


Figure 4A. Percentage of COLS-Liable Students Returning for a Subsequent Semester

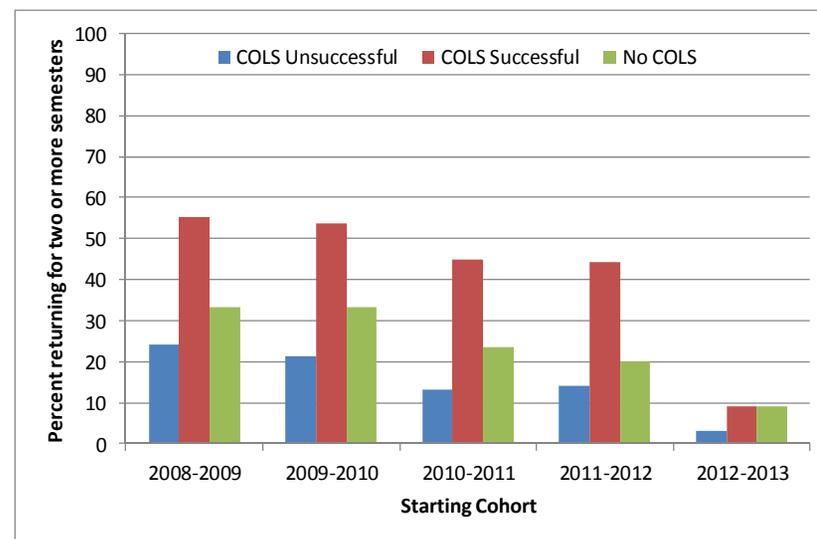


Figure 4B. Percentage of COLS-Liable Students Returning for Two or More Subsequent Semesters

Findings: Section 4 includes one-semester and two-semester retention rates. Retention rates are based on total number of semesters enrolled, not necessarily consecutive semesters. The low rates for the 2012-13 cohort are a reflection of the fact that these students may not have had the opportunity to enroll in subsequent semesters prior to the date of this publication, especially in the case of students who started in the spring semester.

Successful COLS students outperformed the comparison groups in all cohorts. It is important to note that here, because in some cases, non-COLS students had higher average GPA's than the COLS students in their cohorts. Among the non-COLS students, fewer students were retained, so the students that persisted were the strongest of their group.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13

Section 5: Gateway Course Completion

Goal 5: Students successfully completing the College Success Skills course (COLS) should attain higher completion rates in gateway courses than similar students who did not enroll in or did not successfully complete COLS

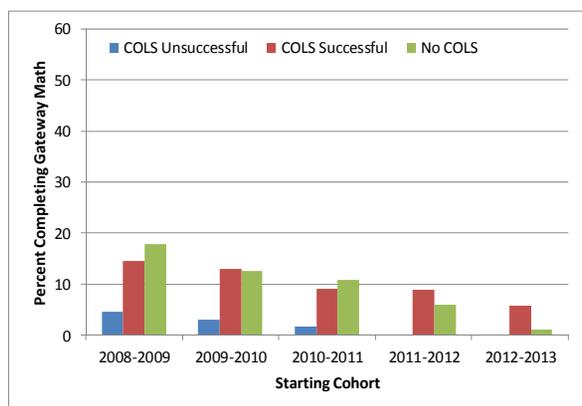


Figure 5A. Gateway Math (MATH 1314) Success Rate for Math-Deficient Students by COLS Outcome

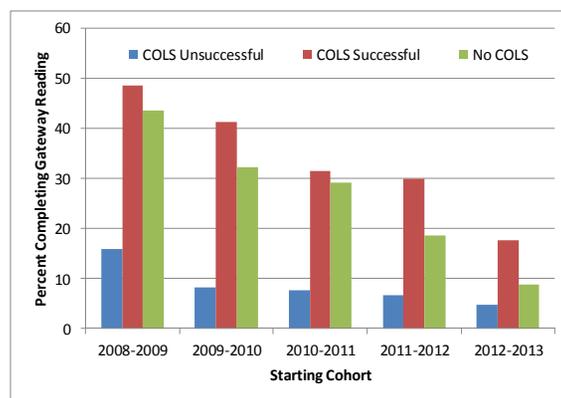


Figure 5B. Gateway Reading (HIST 1301) Success Rate for Reading-Deficient Students by COLS Outcome

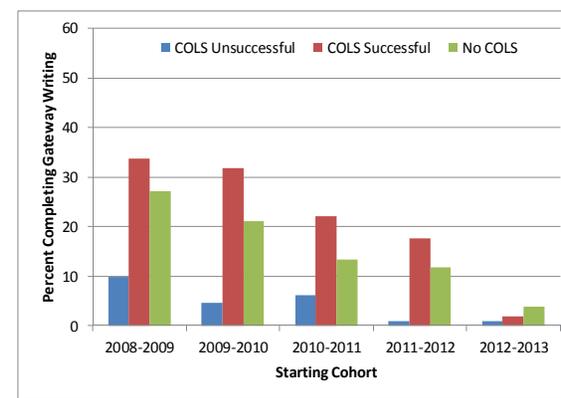


Figure 5C. Gateway Writing (ENGL 1301) Success Rate for Writing-Deficient Students by COLS Outcome

Findings: This section includes completion rate charts for each subject area separately and one chart reflecting the rate of completion of all gateway courses. Gateway courses for math, reading, and writing are, respectively: Math 1314 (college algebra), History 1301, and Engl 1301. Note that the subject area completion charts include rates only for students initially deficient in that subject area. In this report, gateway course completion is defined as completion with a C or better by Spring 2013.

Note that these data reflect progress as of spring 2013, so it is expected that the earlier cohorts will have higher completion rates as they have had more time to complete the gateway courses.

For most cohorts, the successful COLS students completed gateway courses at higher rates than students in the comparison groups. The only exception is gateway writing for the 2012-13 cohort. This finding should probably be considered preliminary, since very few students from the most recent cohort have completed gateway courses.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13

Section 5: Gateway Course Completion

Goal 5: Students successfully completing the College Success Skills course (COLS) should attain higher gateway completion rates than similar students who did not enroll in or did not successfully complete COLS.

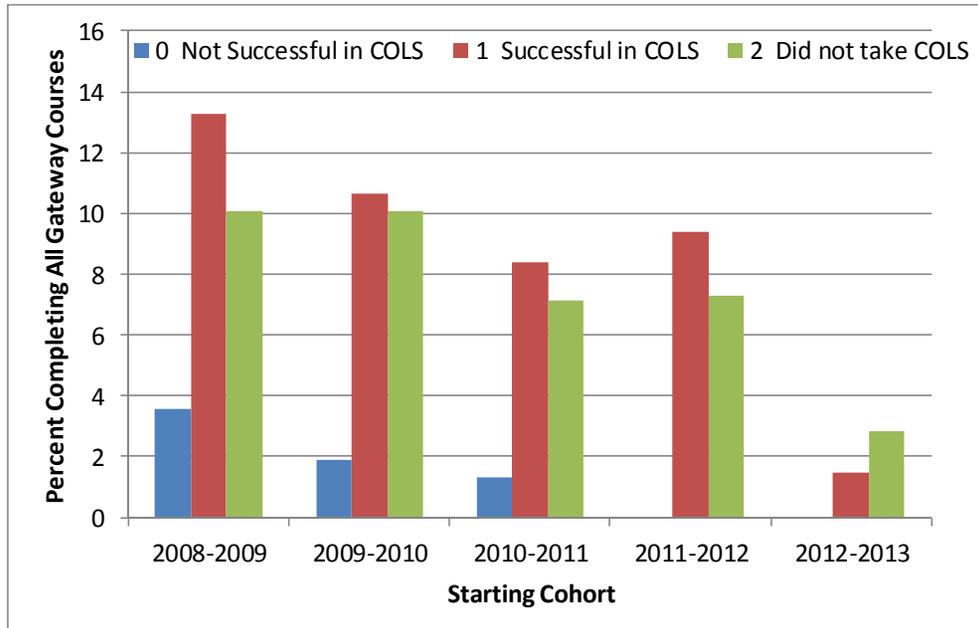


Figure 5D. Rate of Completion of All Gateway Courses by COLS Outcome

Findings: The overall gateway completion chart (Figure 5D) includes all COLS-liable students. Successful COLS students substantially outperformed their non-successful COLS comparison group for all cohorts except 2012-13; only a very small number of students in the 2012-13 cohort have completed all gateway courses to date.

Note that these data reflect progress as of spring 2013, so it is expected that the earlier cohorts will have higher completion rates as they have had more time to complete the gateway courses.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13
Section 6: Results of Pre- and Post-COLS Assessments

Section 6A: Fall 2012

A change in the course objectives was implemented between the fall and spring semesters of this year, so a separate analysis is presented for each semester.

Goal 6: Student mastery levels will improve from pre- to post-test for all course objectives.

Students completed a diagnostic test early in the semester and retested near the end of the semester. The assessment covered 16 different objectives: twelve course objectives and four objectives associated with SWTJC's QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan). The pretest was completed by 450 students; 342 students completed the posttest. Scores analyzed herein include only the 342 students taking both pre- and post-tests. The overall percentage of students mastering each objective increased from pre- to post-test for all objectives. Mastery of an objective is defined as correctly answering at least 75% of the test items pertaining to that objective.

Table 4. Percent of Students Mastering Each Course Objective, Fall 2012

| Course Objective | N | Mean | Mean | Difference |
|---|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. recognize and value the policies procedures and regulations of the college | 342 | 20% | 36% | 15% |
| 2. locate and utilize important college facilities and key personnel | 342 | 85% | 88% | 4% |
| 3. utilize the college library, the internet, computers and other resources | 342 | 25% | 41% | 15% |
| 4. be familiar with college programs and services | 342 | 83% | 89% | 6% |
| 5. create and follow a time management plan | 342 | 68% | 81% | 13% |
| 6. use a variety of note-taking and study strategies | 342 | 53% | 74% | 21% |
| 7. apply a variety of study strategies in preparing for tests | 342 | 61% | 79% | 18% |
| 8. read and effectively respond to assignments | 342 | 43% | 61% | 18% |
| 9. exercise memory skills | 342 | 50% | 74% | 24% |
| 10. apply critical thinking strategies | 342 | 56% | 69% | 13% |
| 11. practice motivational thinking and goal-setting | 342 | 56% | 66% | 10% |
| 12. recognize the consequences of plagiarism | 342 | 51% | 72% | 21% |
| QEP 1. Students will understand Main Idea. | 342 | 27% | 49% | 22% |
| QEP 2. Students will recognize Supporting Detail. | 342 | 58% | 67% | 10% |
| QEP 3. Students will understand Vocabulary in Context | 342 | 25% | 42% | 17% |
| QEP 4. Text book strategies | 342 | 48% | 78% | 30% |

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13
Section 6: Results of Pre- and Post-COLS Assessments

Table 4 shows the percentage of students mastering each objective at the pretest, at the posttest, and the difference between the two mastery rates. The highlighted items are noted as being the lowest-scoring items both at pre- and post-course assessment. While all of these objectives showed improvement, the mastery rates are still somewhat low and these areas may be considered targets for improvement.

The objectives showing the greatest improvement are listed in Table 4, and those showing the least improvement are listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Objectives with greatest improvement

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| QEP Objective 4 | Textbook strategies |
| Course Objective 9 | Exercise memory skills |
| QEP Objective 1 | Understand main idea |

The smallest improvements were found for the objectives listed in Table 5. These are areas which might be considered as targets for improvement.

Table 6. Objectives with least improvement

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Course Objective 2 | Students will locate and utilize important college facilities and key personnel. |
| Course Objective 4 | Be familiar with college programs and services |
| QEP Objective 2 | Recognize supporting detail |

Findings: The overall percentage of students mastering each objective increased from pre- to post-test for all objectives.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13
Section 6: Results of Pre- and Post-COLS Assessments

Section 6B: Spring 2013

Goal 6: Student mastery levels will improve from pre- to post-test for all course objectives.

Students completed a diagnostic test early in the semester and retested near the end of the semester. The assessment covered 16 different objectives: twelve course objectives and four objectives associated with SWTJC's QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan). The pretest was completed by 197 students; 136 students completed the posttest. Scores analyzed herein include only the 136 students taking both pre- and post-tests. The overall percentage of students mastering each objective increased from pre- to post-test for all objectives. Mastery of an objective is defined as correctly answering at least 75% of the test items pertaining to that objective. Table 7 lists all the course objectives, the percent of students mastering each at the pre- and post-course assessments, and the difference between the two mastery rates. The objectives showing the greatest improvement are listed in Table 8, and those showing the least improvement are listed in Table 9.

Table 7. Percent of Students Mastering Each Course Objective, Spring 2013

| Course Objective | N | Mean | Mean | Difference |
|---|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. recognize and value the policies procedures and regulations of the college | 136 | 11% | 21% | 10% |
| 2. locate and utilize important college facilities and key personnel | 136 | 76% | 93% | 16% |
| 3. utilize the college library, the internet, computers and other resources | 136 | 26% | 30% | 4% |
| 4. be familiar with college programs and services | 136 | 79% | 91% | 12% |
| 5. create and follow a time management plan | 136 | 54% | 75% | 21% |
| 6. use a variety of note-taking and study strategies | 136 | 18% | 56% | 38% |
| 7. apply a variety of study strategies in preparing for tests | 136 | 41% | 81% | 40% |
| 8. read and effectively respond to assignments | 136 | 30% | 68% | 38% |
| 9. exercise memory skills | 136 | 51% | 76% | 24% |
| 10. apply critical thinking strategies | 136 | 65% | 82% | 16% |

The highlighted objectives in Table 7 (1, 3, and 6) received the lowest percent mastery on both pre- and posttests. Objectives 1 and 3 showed especially low mastery rates on the posttest. These could be considered potential areas for improvement.

College Success Skills Report, 2012-13
Section 6: Results of Pre- and Post-COLS Assessments

Table 8. Objectives with greatest improvement

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Course Objective 7 | Apply a variety of study strategies in preparing for tests |
| Course Objective 8 | Read and effectively respond to assignments |
| Course Objective 6 | Use a variety of note-taking and study strategies |

Although the amount of improvement on objective 6 was high, student mastery of this objective on the posttest is still fairly low (56%, from Table 7). This is clearly an important objective and potentially a target for improvement.

The smallest improvements were found for the objectives listed in Table 5. These are areas which might be considered as targets for improvement. Objectives 1 and 3 are of particular concern because both pretest and posttest indicated low levels of student mastery. While the improvement in student mastery of objective 4 was small, student mastery levels of this objective were quite high on the pretest (79%), so this should probably be a lesser concern than objectives 1 and 3.

Table 9. Objectives with least improvement

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Course Objective 3 | Utilize the college library, the internet, computers and other resources |
| Course Objective 1 | Recognize and value the policies, procedures, and regulations of the college |
| Course Objective 4 | Be familiar with college programs and services and to effectively utilize them |

Findings: The overall percentage of students mastering each objective increased from pre- to post-test for all objectives.