

Bridging College Readiness Gaps through Summer Bridge Programs

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Abstract

- Summer bridge programs can provide an effective method to reduce the college readiness gap between incoming students from underserved communities and those of more privileged schooling opportunities. Reducing this readiness gap can assist "at risk" students in enhancing their success, improving their retention, and increasing completion rates. This presentation will review the literature related to summer bridge programs, including (a) various program models, (b) factors impacting programs efficacy, and (c) challenges to developing successful programs.

The participants will

- Increase their knowledge of summer bridge program models.
- Enhance their understanding of the issues involved in conducting an evaluation of summer bridge programs.
- Gain an awareness of the financial and operational challenges related to implementing and sustaining summer bridge programs.
- Discover strategies for engaging high school counselors in the summer bridge program recruiting process.

Program Outline

- Introductions
- Summer Bridge Program Models
- Evaluation Issues
- Sustainability
- Bridging the Gap through School Counselors

Presentation Materials:

<http://www.tarleton.edu/~djones/sit>

Target Audiences

- International Students
- First Generation
- High School to College
- At Risk
- Race
- Gender
- Major Based

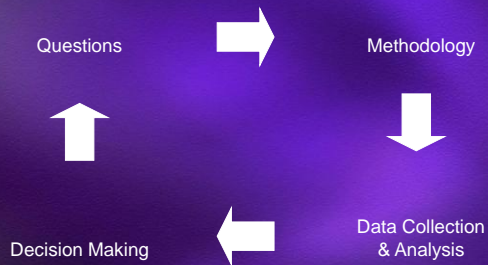
Program Focus

- Access to Supplemental Instruction (SI)
- Effective Academic Skills
- College Life
- Remediation

Summer Bridge Program Samples

Focus	Access to SI	Effective Academic Skills	College Life	Remediation
Int'l Studs	SMC	SMC	SMC	
First Gen	AR State		AZ State	
HS to College	IPFW	IPFW	IPFW	
At Risk	IPFW	IPFW	IPFW	
Race	AACC	AACC		AACC
Gender	NC State	NC State RC	NC State	
Major Based	UMN OSU TN LS	UMN OSU TN LS UM	UMN OSU TN LS UM	UMN OSU TN LS
STEM	UMD LA	UMD LS RC	UMD LS	UMD LS
Transition			A&M	

Evaluation Model



Questions

1. Evaluation starts with a question and then seeks to answer that question.

- The question may be simple (Is retention improved?) or complex to evaluate (Did participants' leadership skills, understanding of diverse cultures, and/or study skills improve?)

Sample Questions

- Do summer bridge participants have higher levels of academic success compared to non-participants
- Do the most at-risk students benefit from the program and experience higher levels of academic success than non-participants?
- Do first-generation scholars benefit from participating in the program?
- Were there differences in students' perceptions of the program and self-reported learning outcomes as a function of the type of bridge program offered?

Source: Evenbeck, S. E., Hanson, M. J., & Williams, G. A. (2008)

Methodology

2. The evaluation process requires the development of methodology for gathering data to answer the question.
 - The methodology will require measurable performance indicators (retention rates, placement in courses beyond developmental level, participation rates in select activities, etc.)
 - The data will be specific to the program and its intended outcomes (just collect data that focuses on the purpose of the program and relates directly to the question being asked)

Example Measures

- Retention
- Academic performance
- Attitude
- Adjustment to college
- Graduation rates
- Self-perceptions of abilities
- Quality of interactions with faculty

Data Collected & Analyzed

3. The data are then collected, analyzed and interpreted to arrive at the answer to the question.
 - Statistics are used to analyze the data
 - Interpretation suggests whether the answer to the question is favorable or not

Decision Making

4. Finally, decisions about the program are made based on the evaluation findings.
 - Mechanisms need to be in place to ensure the data are used for improvement, maintenance, or other actions that may be taken (i.e., close the loop)

Sustainability

	Financial	Operational
Implementing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Start-Up Costs •Seed Money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •University Support •Recruiting Students
Sustaining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cost Structure (Credit v Noncredit or hybrid) •Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Demonstrating Effectiveness •Staffing

Bridging the Gap through School Counselors

Summer Bridge Staff		School Counselors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Providing information to school counselors •Meeting with school counselors in the school •Inviting school counselors to campus •Facilitating communication through existing relationships (e.g., Recruiters, TRIO programs) •Participating in school activities (e.g., Career Days) •Inviting school counselors to participate summer closing ceremonies •Inviting school counselors to participate as summer program staff 	→ Students ←	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Providing information to students •Identifying students for the program •Visiting college campuses •Hosting college night and inviting local inviting bridge staff from local colleges •Teaching/volunteering in transition programs •Conducting financial workshops in computer lab and inviting bridge staff to discuss summer aid programs •Providing letters of reference and assisting students in completing summer bridge application.

Q & A
