

Addressing the Needs of English Learners in Developmental Education Reforms

Reimagining Developmental Education

CAPR \ 2019

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English as a Second Language in California's Community Colleges

November 22, 2019

Olga Rodriguez, Sarah Bohn, Laura Hill, Bonnie Brooks

Supported with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the College Futures Foundation, and the Sutton Family Fund



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ESL programs can facilitate economic and social mobility for non-native speakers

- Every year, thousands of new students enroll in ESL coursework at California's community colleges (CCC)
 - Some simply want to improve their English
 - Others are pursuing career credentials or a college degree
- CCC's have a unique opportunity to help facilitate economic and social mobility of English learners
- However, little is known about what ESL programs look across the CCC system and how students are doing in achieving their educational goals
- Given statewide reforms to "credit ESL," we need to know more about ESL programs and outcomes for degree-seeking students

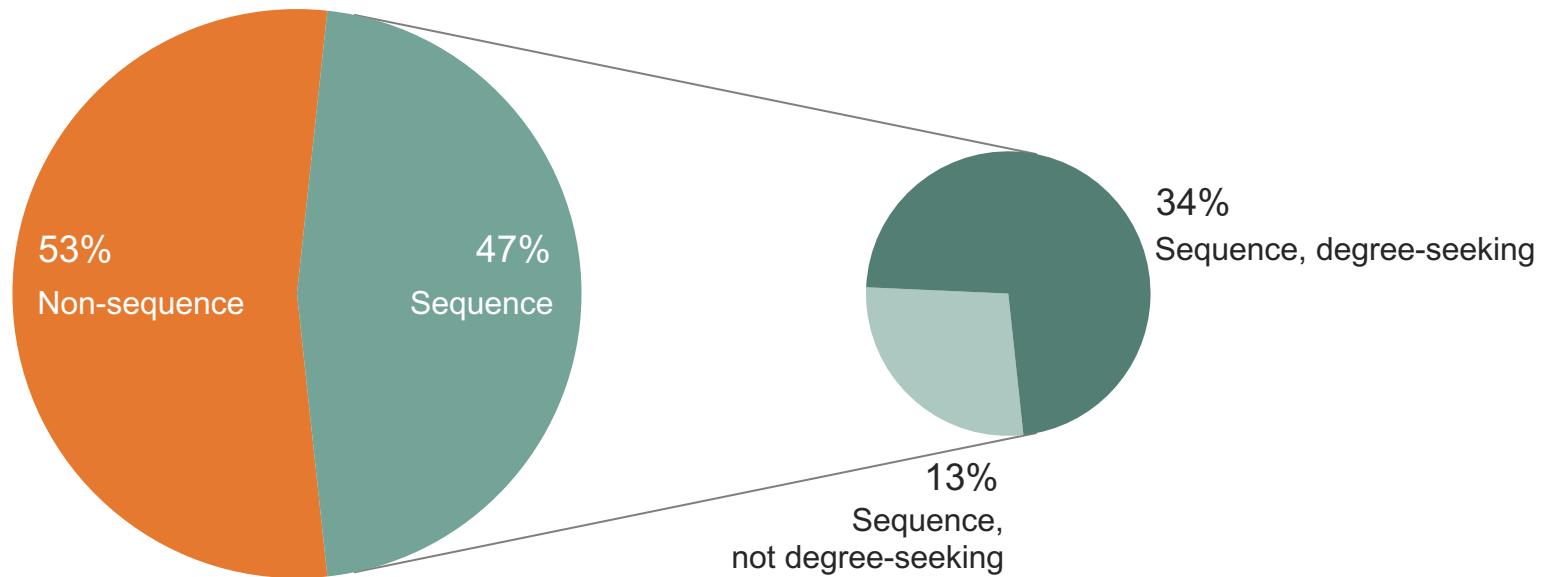


Reforms to ESL programs are well under way

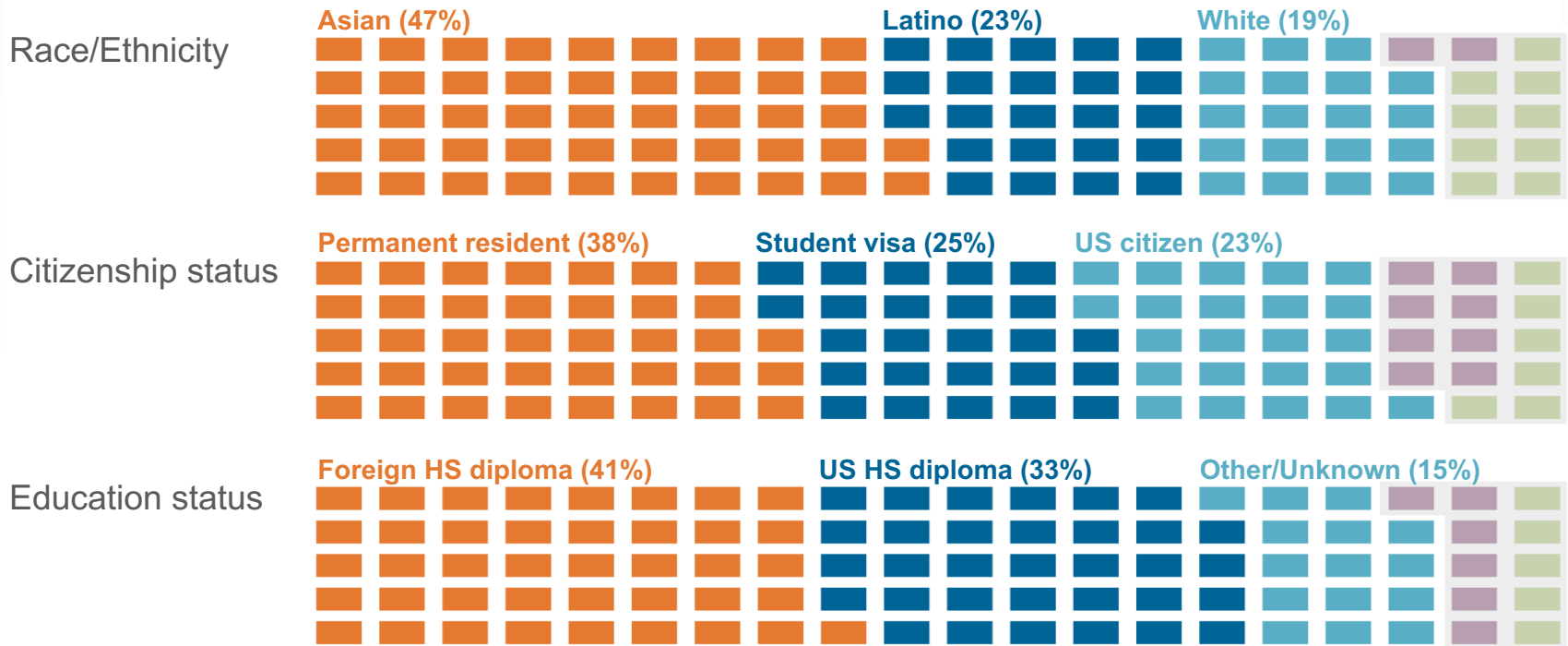
- Assembly Bill (AB) 705 requires colleges to reform credit ESL programs so that they do not deter or delay educational progress
 - Colleges must maximize the probability that a student in credit ESL will enter and complete transfer-level English within three years
 - Utilize assessment and placement policies that are in line with maximizing probability
 - Achieve full implementation by Fall 2020
- Students affected:
 - Those with goals to seek a degree or transfer
 - Those who are enrolled in courses that will lead to transfer-level English

One-third of ESL students are degree-seeking

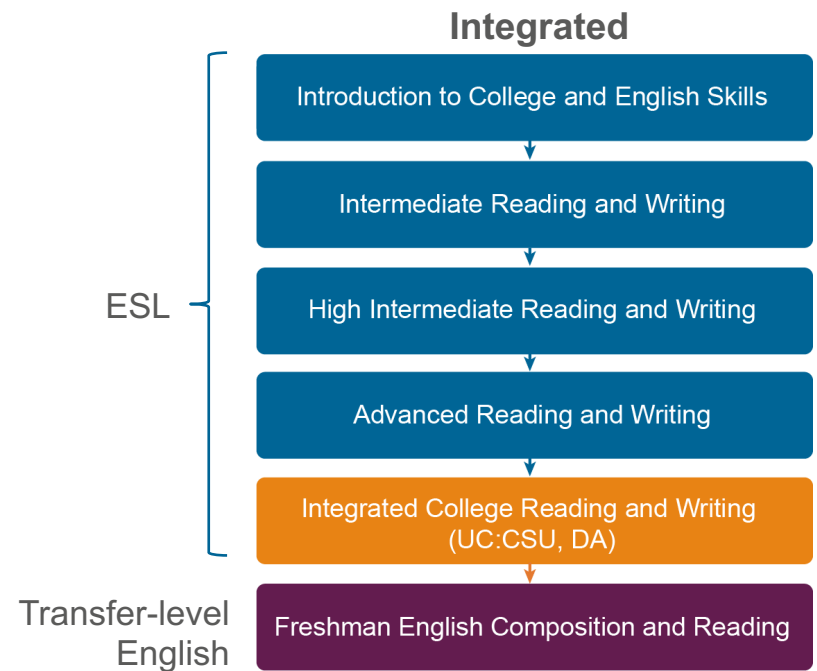
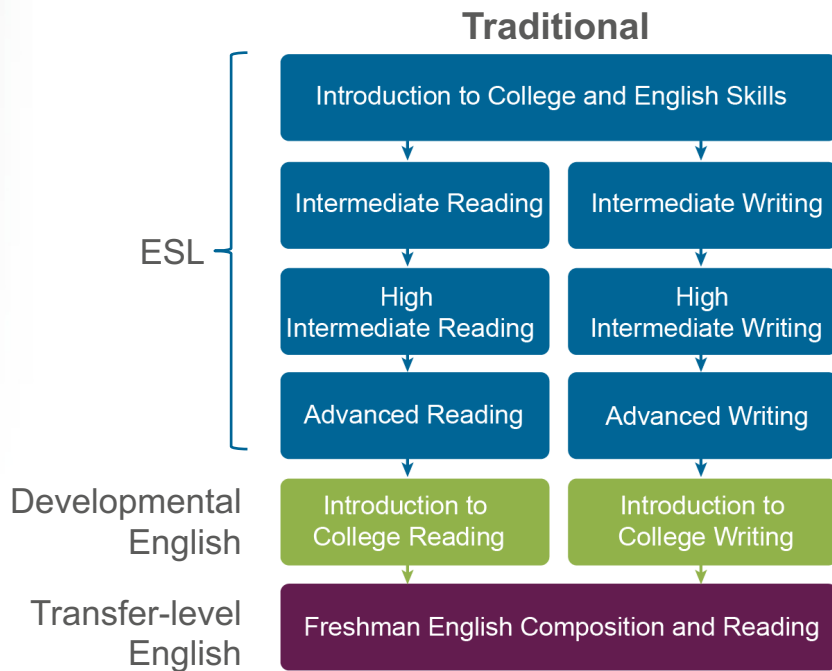
General ESL population



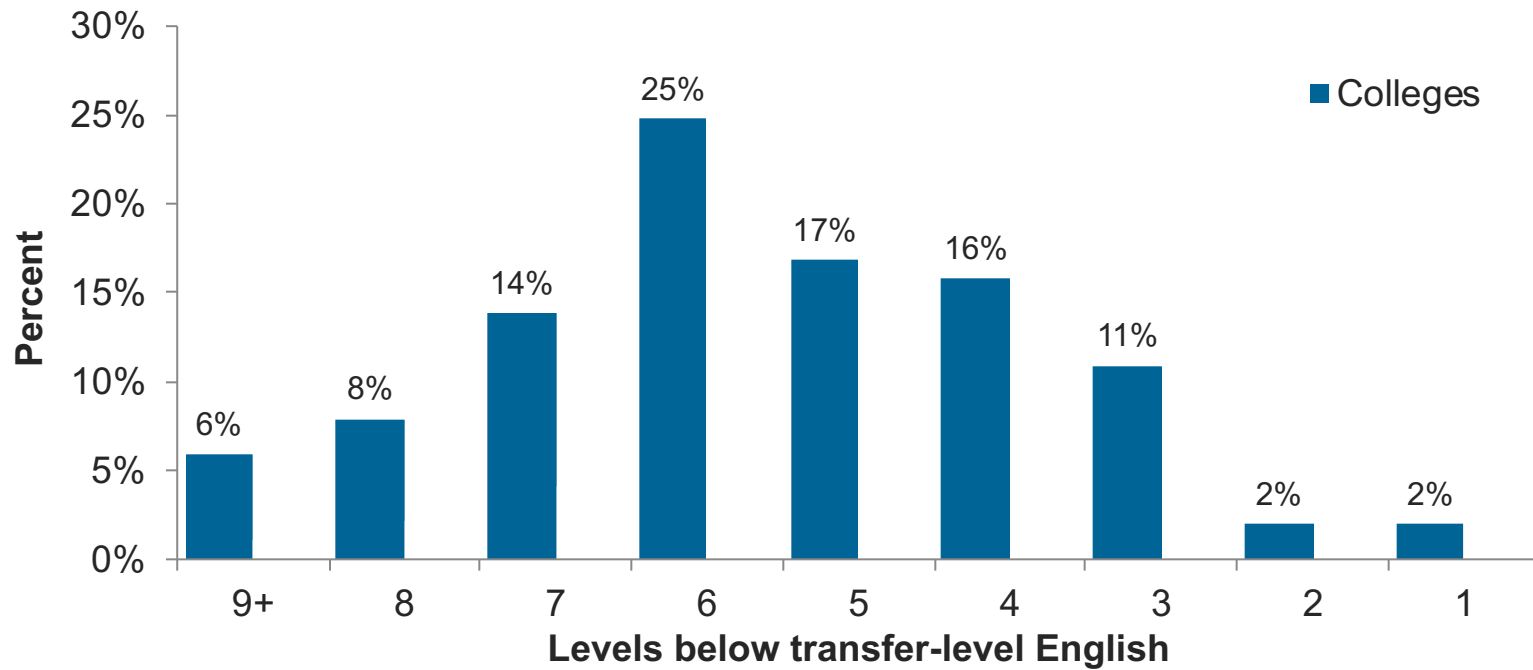
Degree-seeking students are demographically diverse



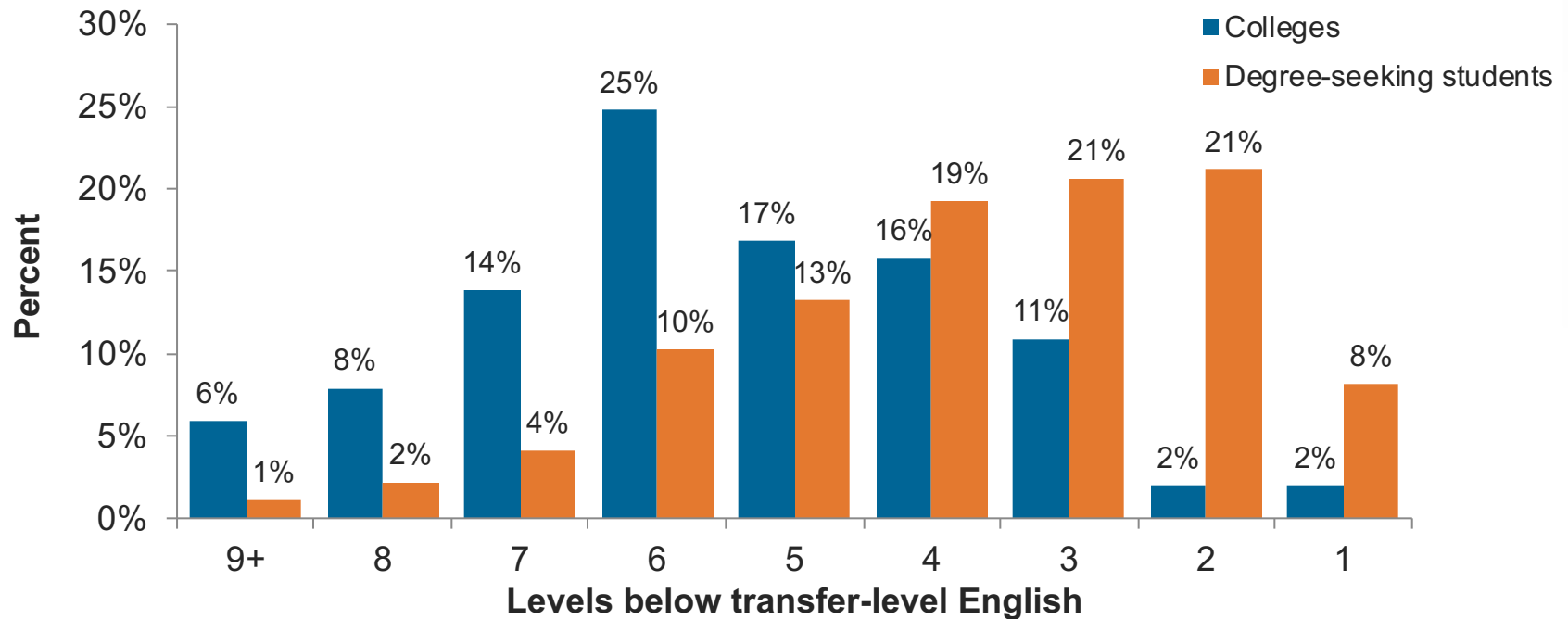
Many colleges are moving away from traditional sequences



Some ESL sequences are lengthy...

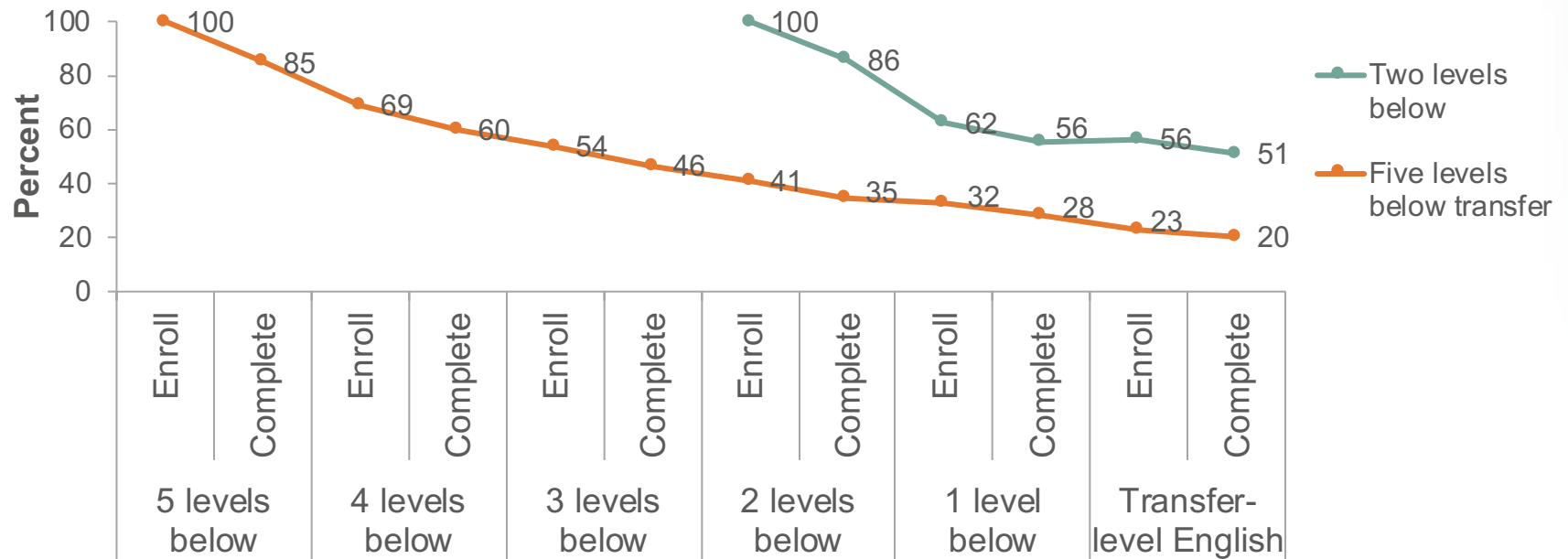


...but most students start only a few levels below transfer-level English



Students who start ESL sequences at higher levels are more likely to complete transfer-level English

Six-year progression in ESL sequence



Three key ESL features increase the likelihood of students completing transfer-level English

- Transferable ESL courses
 - Help students make tangible progress toward degree/transfer goals
 - Emphasize the rigor of ESL as college-level foreign language work
- Integrated ESL courses
 - More likely to receive “just-in-time” support with necessary skills (e.g. grammar)
 - Designed with transfer-level English course objectives in mind
 - Alignment of reading and writing assignments
- ESL sequence leading directly to transfer-level English
 - Provides language support throughout the path to transfer-level English

Recommendations

- Several ESL reforms seem especially promising
 - Shorter ESL sequences
 - Transferable ESL courses
 - Integrated approaches to teaching English skills
 - Direct pathways from ESL to transfer-level English
- Seamless connections between non-credit and credit ESL
- Monitoring assessment and placement policies will ensure accuracy, effectiveness, and equity
- All ESL students should be encouraged to pursue a degree or transfer

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Thank you!

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.

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Thank you!

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Equity for English learners in developmental education reforms

Linda Harklau



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Equitable reforms for English learners: Learning from a negative example

- University System of Georgia (USG) eliminating virtually all classes and services for English learners
- Top-down and opaque reform process
- Monolingualist notions of **equality** versus **equity for multilingual English learners**

Best practices in developmental education and equity for emergent multilingual students

- Use **multiple measures** to assess postsecondary readiness and place students into remediation or first-year college courses
- Require or incentivize regular student participation in **enhanced advising activities**
- Offer students performance-based **monetary incentives**
- **Compress or mainstream** developmental education with course redesign
- Teach students how to become **self-regulated learners**
- Implement comprehensive, **integrated, and long-lasting support programs**

(Bailey et al., 2016)

Recommendation: Use **multiple measures** to assess postsecondary readiness and place students into remediation or first-year college courses

- Giving credit for multilingualism
- Alternatives to English-only high stakes tests
- High school outreach programs

Recommendation: Require or incentivize regular student participation in **enhanced advising activities**

- Counselors who are multilingual or have expertise in working with English learners
- Counselors who are from local multilingual communities
- Are key documents translated into community languages?
- Do advising “data analytics” consider EL-specific situations and concerns?

Recommendation: Offer students performance-based **monetary incentives**

- Are financial incentives available to students or families with mixed visa status?
- Are counselors trained in how student and family visa status affects enrollment, tuition, and financial aid eligibility?

Recommendation: **Compress or mainstream** developmental education with course redesign

- Compression or mainstreaming **plus**: Providing supplemental support for accelerated sequence for English learners
- Explore alternatives to a first-year composition corequisite course
- Coordinate and integrate pathways and cohort programs with ESL support

Recommendation: Teach students how to become **self-regulated learners**

- Is this a relevant goal in courses for English learners?

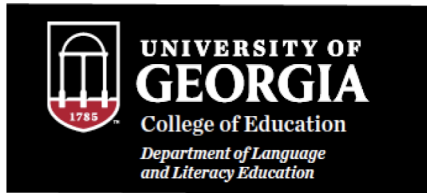
Recommendation: Implement comprehensive, integrated, and long-lasting support programs

- Prioritize multilingual/ESL expertise in hiring tutors and instructors
- Providing adequate tutoring support
- Campus climate: Is EL education a shared responsibility?
- Do mainstream educators have opportunities for professional development for working with multilingual students?

Monitoring equity for ELs

- Is there an iterative and transparent process for monitoring EL progress?
- Do those making policies affecting EL admission, instruction, and retention have training or background in working with multilingual/English learner students?
- Is there an administrator designated specifically to monitor EL progress in reforms and be an advocate for English learners on campus?
- Big data doesn't always work with small heterogeneous populations—find alternative evaluative measures

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Pedagogical considerations of English language learners in co-requisite courses

Heather B. Finn, PhD

Sharon Avni, PhD



The CUNY Context

- **The CUNY Master Plan (2016-2020)**
 - Elimination of remediation classes
 - Resulting implementation of co-requisite classes in math and English
- **Serving ELs at CUNY:**
 - Almost no programs at four-year colleges
 - Only 2-3 levels at community colleges
 - Single writing exam (CATW) for placement in/out of ESL
 - Shift to multiple measures
 - Shift to integrated reading and writing curriculum

Co-requisites at BMCC

- Co-requisite classes started in the English department in Fall 2015
- Faculty driven
 - $\text{ENG101} + \text{ENG95}^* = \text{ENG100.5}$
 - 6 hours, 3 credit class
 - Taught by one instructor

*Intended for English speaking students in need of remedial writing (not ELS)

Writing on the wall

Scant literature on:

- Faculty experiences in co-requisite courses
- Pedagogical considerations in co-requisite teaching
- ELs in co-requisites

Our studies:

Avni, S., & Finn, H. B. (2019). Pedagogy and Curricular Choice in Community College Accelerated Writing Courses. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 43(1), 54-64.

Finn, H. & Avni, S. (forthcoming). Combining developmental writing and first year composition classes: Faculty perspectives on what co-requisite teaching means for curriculum and pedagogy. In M. Siegal & E. Gilliland (Eds.), *First Year Composition at the Community College: Empowering the Teacher*. Ann, Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

What about ELs?

- How does this model apply to ELs?
- ENG/ESL are separate departments at BMCC
 - English Department
 - Academic Literacy and Linguistics (ALL)
- ALL offers co-reqs to ELs
 - CRT100 + ESL95 = CRT100.6 (6 hours, 3 credits)
 - LIN100 + ESL95 = LIN100.6 (6 hours, 3 credits)

Research Questions

1. How do co-requisite models for ELs shape curricular, pedagogical, and assessment decisions in content courses?
2. In what ways do co-requisite instructors address the reading and writing needs of ELs while simultaneously providing course content?

Finding #1: Balancing content and language development

“I thought at the beginning of the semester that my bigger challenge was going to be making sure that I covered the CT content, but I find that my actual challenge is making sure that I get enough ESL in there. For me, with my ESL background, I find that ESL is taking a back seat to content, and that's concerning for me.”

(Lisa, Interview 2, 10/22/18)

Finding #2: Assessing students' learning

“Interestingly, some of the strongest thinkers are the weakest writers. So then I have to catch myself from just assuming, “oh she's fine.” And then I look at the writing and it's like, ‘oh my gosh she's not fine at all.’”

(Valerie, Interview 2, 0/15/18)

Finding #3: Assessing students' preparedness

“What I’m guided by is what they need to be successful in English 101. How can I give them ESL/CT plus basic English 101? Otherwise I’m doing them a disservice [if I don’t prepare them for English 101].”

Adam, Interview 2, 10/22/18

Assignment

How Do You See The World?

The purpose of this essay is for you to show me how you see the world around you, and to explain *how* you decide what your views are. Your worldview is your idea about how the world works. This paper is a chance for you to explore your thought process as we begin to discuss more advanced concepts in Critical Thinking. Be specific and thoughtful. The point of this paper is to be *introspective*.

Student Writing #1

World is what we make of it. For me world is full of magic and wonder and beautiful place. I can feel intense sadness, profound happiness can be just around the corner. The world conspires for me to be happy not unhappy. My parents, teacher, professors help me understand the values of things what I have around me. All I learn from them that make a beautiful world around me. It's all a matter of perspective of stepping back and taking a good look at the world around me. My personal experience, evidence and references help me to develop and expand my view.

Student Writing #2

It's kind of funny when I think of this question, because for me I think the world runs at the group of people works on their position. To further describe this point, in a village there got to have some people hunter or the farmer in another word it's the people produce the food. Artisan stand for the middle class right here, which mean the people creates tools for other people to do things. Elders are the government we had right now, they were the guys who make decisions about the village. Without them the world could run completely different. In the city which I lived Brooklyn, we got a lots of people got them own positions. In other word, grocery shops and restaurants were the famer and the hunter. Teachers are the artisan that give us the education. Mayor is the elder that make decision for us.

Implications

- In what ways do co-requisites align or clash with what we know about language development from the field of SLA?
- What is the role of community colleges in developing language among ELs?
- What types of professional development are needed for co-req professors with no background in working with ELs?
 - What does the college professor need to know about ELs in the age of co-requisites?

Thank you!

Forthcoming article:

Community College Journal of Research and Practice: "Meeting the needs of English language learners in co-requisite courses at community college"

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Thank you!

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ESL, Developmental English, and Beyond: Rethinking Pathways for English Learners

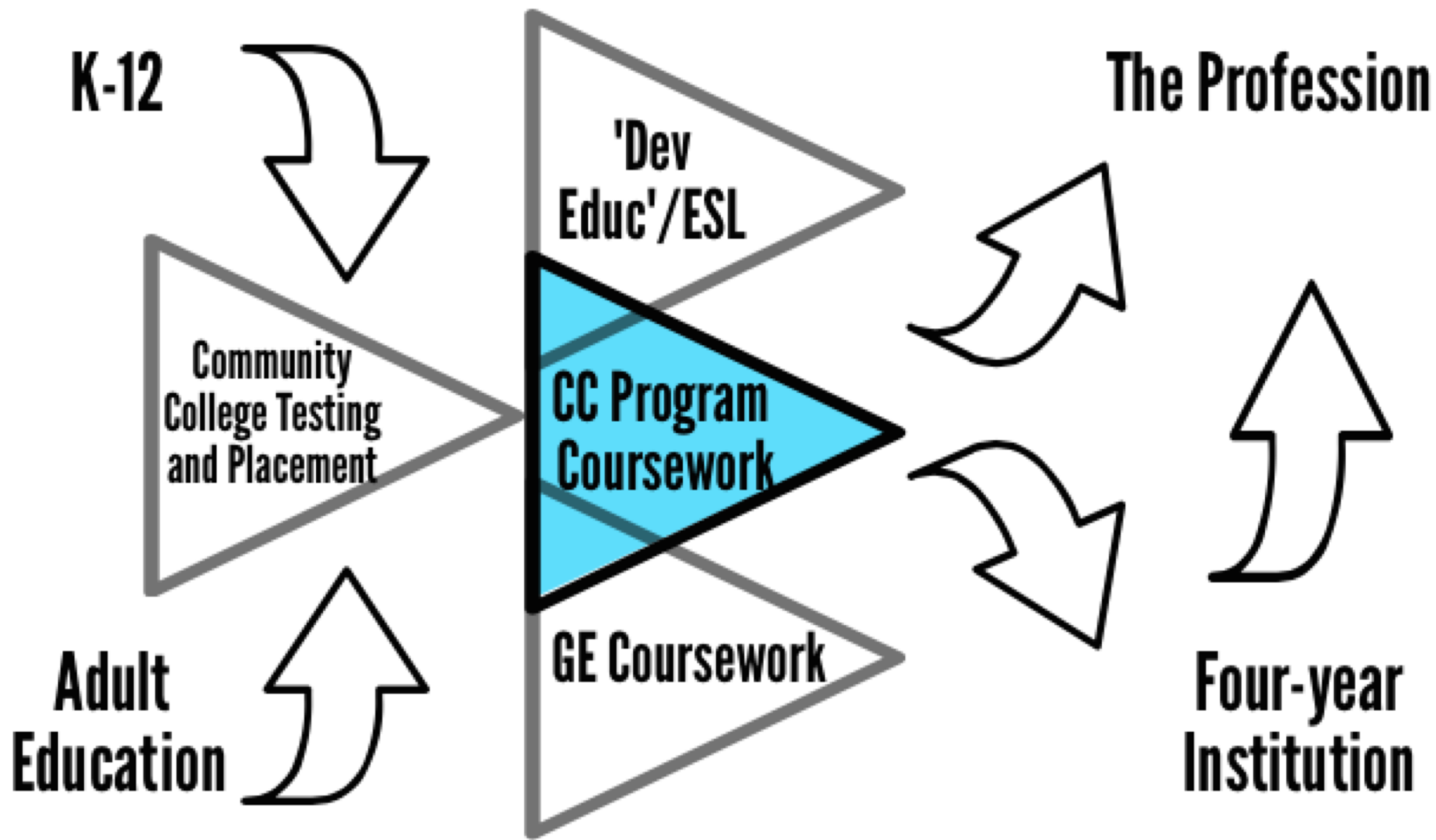
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The “New Mainstream”

Community colleges are critical and understudied sites of access to higher education and career preparation, especially for the “new mainstream” (Enright, 2011) including **English learners (EL)** and other **language minority (minoritized) students (LM)**



Traditional Notions of “Pathways” for Students in ESL and Developmental English

Language and literacy pathways through multiple, sequenced ESL or Developmental English courses that do not bear credit toward degrees, certificates, or transfer

Underlying assumptions:

- Language and literacy as “skills” to be mastered (Ivanic, 2004)
- “Remedial pedagogy” (Grubb, 2013)
- “Curricularization” of language (Valdés, 2011)

“**Success**” defined in terms of development of *skills*--and progress through the ESL and English course sequences.

A Different Kind of “Pathway”

Academic pathways into, through, and beyond *college-level, credit-bearing academic and professional coursework and programs.*

Underlying assumption:

Language and literacy develop as students engage with registers, genres, and discourse communities in meaningful, socially-situated activity across disciplines (Beaufort, 2007; Carter, 2007; Lea & Street, 1998; Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013; Russell, 2002; Valdés, Kibler, & Walqui, 2014).

“Success” = Development of language and literacy *practices* necessary to progress through academic and professional programs and into four-year colleges or directly into careers.

Investigating language and literacy at two California community colleges

1. What disciplinary and professional language and literacies are associated with coursework required for students pursuing careers in **allied health, early childhood education, and engineering**?
2. How do **faculty** understand students' experiences navigating the language and literacy demands of these courses?
3. How do **students** describe their experiences?
4. How do faculty and students understand challenges facing **language-minority students** in particular?

Data collection and analysis

- Community College A
 - Allied Health
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Engineering
- Community College B
 - Allied Health
 - Early Childhood Education
 - Engineering
- Document analysis
 - Course descriptions
 - Focal courses
 - “Signature assignments”
- Site visits
- Faculty interviews
A (24) + B (12) = 36
- Student focus groups
A (9) + B (8) = 17

Instructors struggled to identify language and literacy challenges facing their students

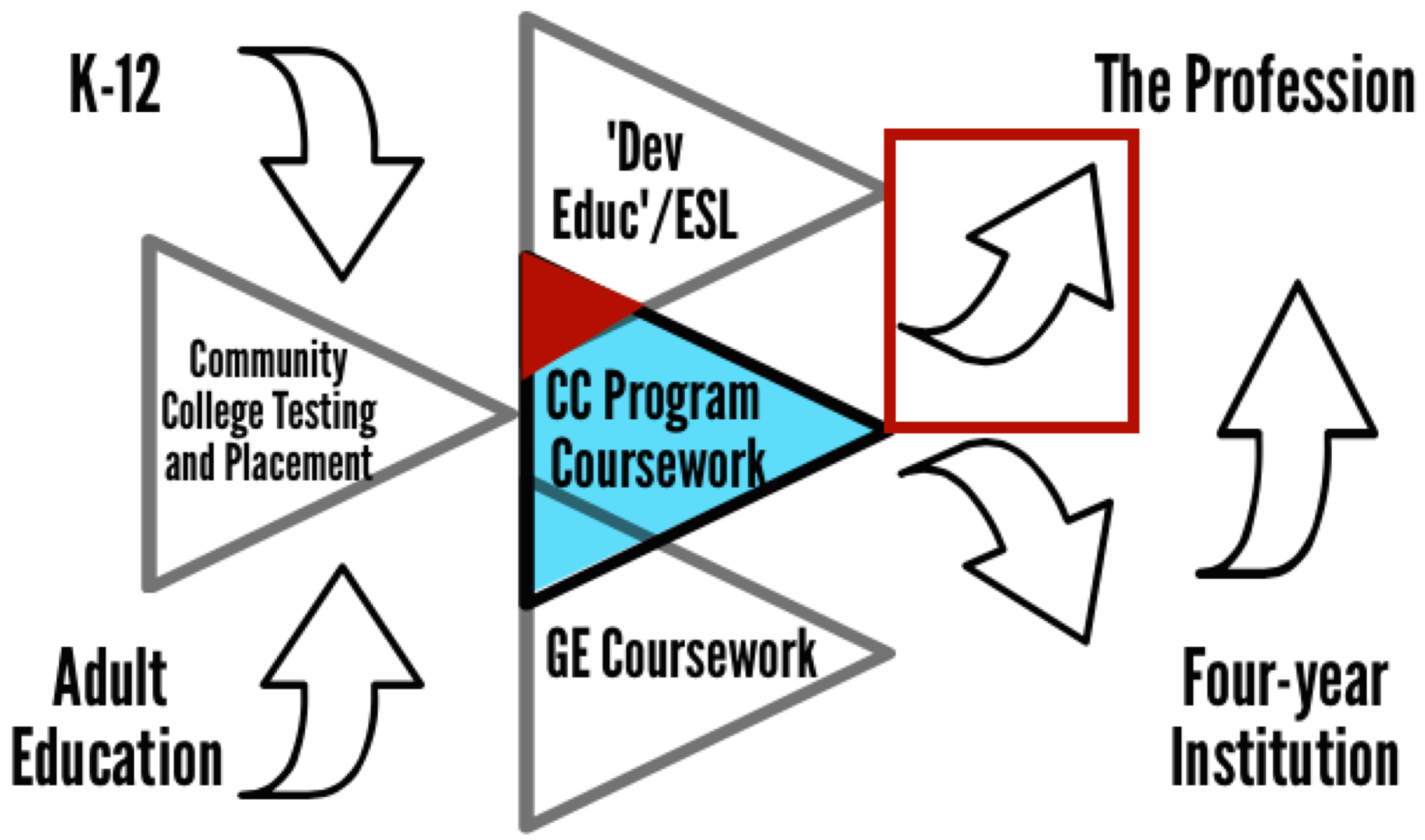
“Sometimes I do not understand exactly where the difficulties are for my students.”

Instructors focused less on disciplinary literacy than other challenges facing students

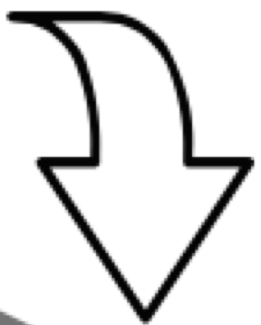
- “Critical thinking”
- Problem solving
- General academic literacy (reading textbooks, “college level writing”)
- Balancing home, work, and academic lives
- Study skills, time management, perseverance

Students themselves DID talk about the importance of disciplinary literacy

- They identified a number of disciplinary literacy practices
- They mentioned that ESL and English courses often did not prepare them for these practices
- They discussed the extent to which program-area courses were preparing them for needed professional competencies



K-12



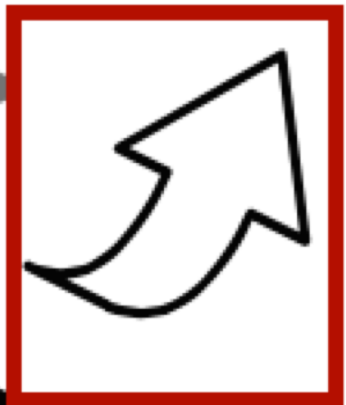
**Community
College Testing
and Placement**



**'Dev
Educ'/ESL**

**CC Program
Coursework**

GE Coursework



The Profession



**Adult
Education**



**Four-year
Institution**

Disciplinary literacy highlighted by students (“like a different language”)

Allied Health: conducting reviews of medical research literature, reading peer reviewed research articles, summarizing the studies in writing.

Early Childhood Education: using observation and assessment protocols, writing case study reports.

Engineering: understanding and producing technical documentation, charts, and multidimensional diagrams; preparing experimental lab reports.

Engineering students discussing writing in English class vs. in Engineering:

A: ... I've taken um English 2 and English before that. And those writings, you have to like fluff it up and like animate it and make it like [really over the top]

B: [Fancy]

A: Yeah! And this one's more of just [like]

B: [Strict]

A: Get to the point. Tell us what happened. Why did it fail? What happened afterwards? ... So I, enjoy that 'cause I'm not good at the other type of English [laughs]. I'm good at like [getting]

C: [For me it was] actually the opposite. I'm like really good at fluffing things up [laughs] and creative with what I'm gonna be presenting or writing! and when it's just like, when [the instructor] was like "Okay you know you guys have to go, you know state your points, you know don't fluff it too much just get facts." I was like OH NO!

Implications

- With developmental education reforms, it is likely that more students with wider range of language and literacy backgrounds will be in disciplinary and professional preparation courses (hopefully!).
- For English Learners (and others), development of disciplinary literacy must be a shared responsibility among ESL, English, and other disciplinary instructors.
- Assumptions behind what kind of student “pathways” ESL and English courses are responsible for will need to change.
- Notions of “guided pathways,” “meta-majors,” “metadisciplines,” and “metagenres” might provide some guidance.

Acknowledgments & Contact Info

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Recent Related Publications

Bunch, G. C., Schlaman, H., Lang, N. W., & Kenner, K. (in press). "Sometimes I do not understand exactly where the difficulties are for my students": Language and literacy for the New Mainstream in community colleges." *Community College Review*

Bunch, G. C. (in press). Preparing the "New Mainstream" for college and careers: Academic and professional metagenres in community colleges. *Teaching English in the Two-Year College (TETYC)*.

Bunch, G. C., Endris, A., & Kenner, K. A. (in press). First-year composition faculty in a changing community college policy landscape: Engagement, agency, and leadership in the midst of reform. In M. Siegal & B. Gilliland (Eds.). *First year composition at the community college: Empowering the teacher*. University of Michigan Press.

Bunch, G. C., & Schlaman, H. (in press). Policies impacting multilingual writers from high school to higher education: A guide for inquiry across contexts. In K. Crosby, and L. Alariste (Eds.). *L2 writing across PK16 contexts: Intersections of teaching, learning, and development*. University of Michigan Press.

Bunch, G. C., & Kibler, A. K. (2015). Integrating language, literacy, and academic development: Alternatives to traditional English as a Second Language and remedial English for language minority students in community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 39(1), 20-33.

Kibler, A. K., Bunch, G. C., & Endris, A. K. (2011). Community college practices for U.S.-educated language-minority students: A resource-oriented framework. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 34(2), 201-222.

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