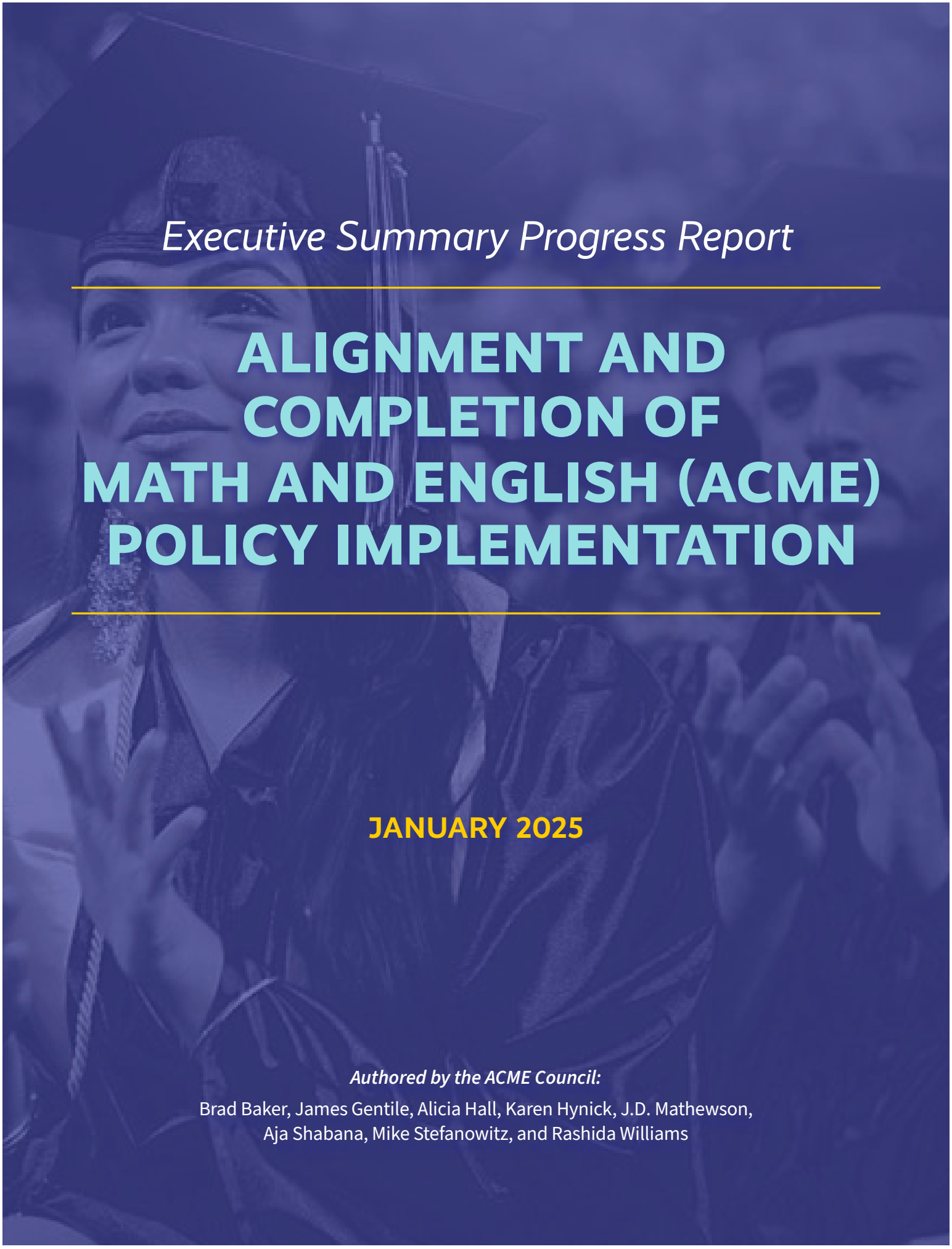

Executive Summary Progress Report

ALIGNMENT AND COMPLETION OF MATH AND ENGLISH (ACME) POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

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Alignment and Completion of Math and English (ACME) Report

Executive Summary

As an open access institution, educating the diverse continuum of students who need additional support to succeed in college level courses is aligned to Connecticut State Community College's (CT State's) mission and equity agenda. The twelve legacy Connecticut community colleges, now campuses of CT State, began developmental education reform as many post-secondary providers in the nation did, following several landmark studies conducted by the Community College Research Center and Complete College America that questioned the effectiveness of course placement into college level courses via Accuplacer and Compass Exam between 2011- 2012 as well as the outcomes of traditional developmental education.

These studies sparked a national response across the community college sector to think differently on how to support developmental students, who were disproportionately Black and Latine, low income, and English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students with limited positive outcomes related to achieving the first milestone markers linked to degree completion: completion of college-level math and English courses within the first year of enrollment. These findings ultimately influenced the passing of Public Act (PA) 12-40.

During this same time frame, corequisite models that coupled introductory credit-based courses in English and math with just-in-time added support courses, were being piloted and scaled through Baltimore City Community College with the Accelerated Learning Program, the California Community College's Acceleration Project, and the University of Texas at Austin's Dana Center Math Pathways project, all of which began showing promising student outcomes. Based on these trends and the promising outcomes being seen with corequisite models, the Board of Regent's Alignment and Completion of Math and English (ACME) Policy was developed. It sought to expand corequisite programming as the default way to academically support students by immersing them into college-level courses. As the merger of the community college system continued to gain momentum and additional data nationally showed the improved outcomes of corequisites, the Board of Regents passed the ACME Policy in 2021, with a directive to have the full policy implemented for the fall of 2025.

The core tenets of the policy were for faculty to lead the design of a curriculum that places students directly into gateway, college-level, transferable mathematics and English courses with corequisite supports as needed rather than into prerequisite developmental sequences; for faculty to lead the design of placement processes to more accurately identify student corequisite support needs in gateway, college-level, transferable

mathematics and English courses; and to expand practices to eliminate the completion gap in gateway, college-level, transferable coursework in English and mathematics, specifically the gap that exists for Black and Latine students when compared to White students.

The ACME policy also sought to require students to register for college-level English and math within the first 24 credits of their program. It noted that the co-requisites should be concurrent with the gateway course and voluntary, and that no grades to be assigned. The policy looked to create and foster ongoing faculty professional learning opportunities related to developmental learners and pedagogy, to prescribe math pathways and curriculum based on areas of study, to establish optimal class sizes, to identify multiple measures to determine course placement including a guided self-placement option, and to use data-informed key performance indicators to gauge success and identify areas for continuous improvement. Ongoing annual reports to the Board of Regents were to be developed and presented to track progress and identify any adjustments needed to the policy.

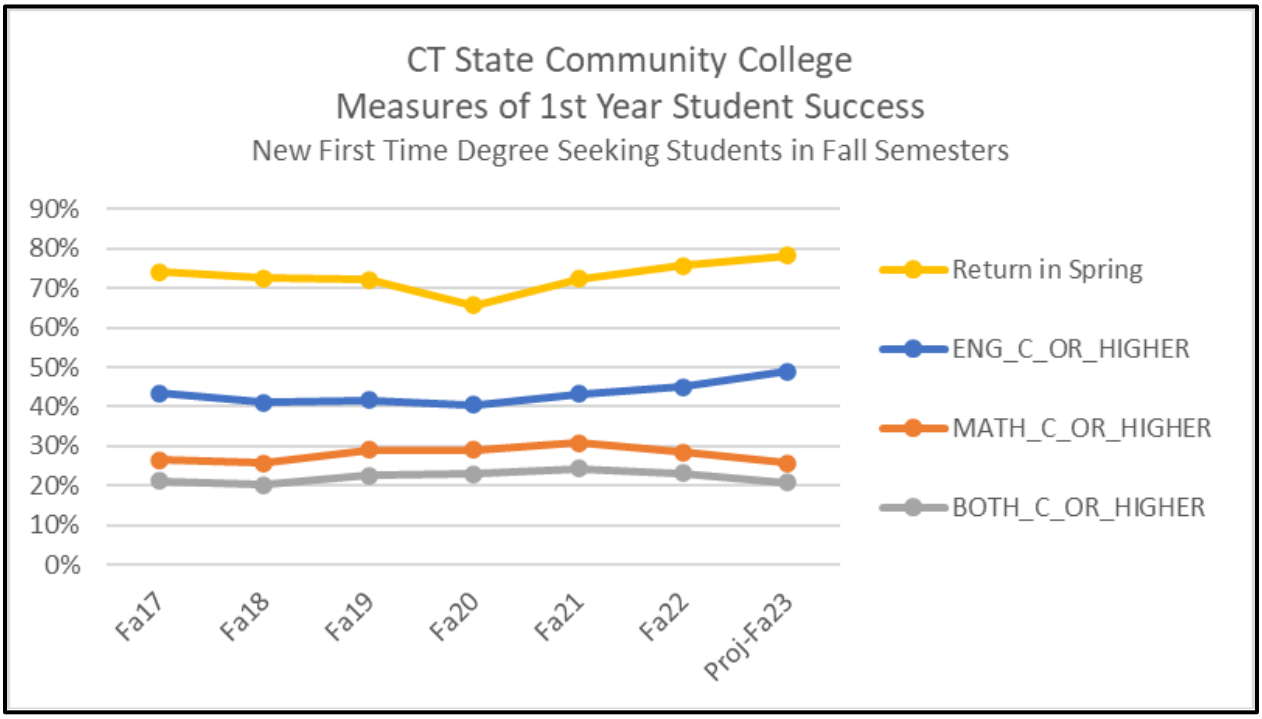
Full implementation of ACME Policy was slated to begin in Fall 2023. This time was the first semester during which all programs and certificates would be aligned and unified under the newly formed CT State. This date ideally presented the opportunity to integrate all changes to the math curriculum at the same time for the least disruption to students, staff, and faculty. However, in Fall of 2022 the new CT State administration requested that the policy be phased in over the two-year implementation window provided for in the ACME Policy based on feedback from the college community. This phase-in approach provided additional time to gain buy-in on the policy, as well as an opportunity to adjust implementation based on research and data. At the same time, it added confusion and created complications with program alignment, as each program had to wrestle with the implications of a changing set of curriculum requirements over a two-year period.

Though progress with developing and implementing the corequisite model in English, English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and Math has been made at CT State, additional research, resources, and support are needed to continue to gain sustainability and continuously improve student success. This is due in part because, unbeknownst to the framers of the policy, March of 2020 occurred with the onset of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID), forever altering education in the United States. Coupling the emergence of COVID during the same time of the consolidation of the community college system, along with significant administrative leadership changes at CT State between 2021- 2025, elements of the intended ACME Policy have not yet been actualized.

Between 2022- 2024, additional studies have been conducted on the scale of developmental reform, including the Tennessee Community Colleges full scale implementation of co-requisites. This study affirms better outcomes with college-level English and Math completion within the first 24 credits but saw no significant gains on student graduation outcomes. A study released in 2024 out of University of California Los Angeles finds developmental reform needs to (1) Address faculty and practitioners' beliefs; (2) Move from structural to instructional reform; (3) Improve data accessibility, reporting, and accountability; (4) Expand equitable college access opportunities for students in high school; and (5) Address barriers facing English learners.

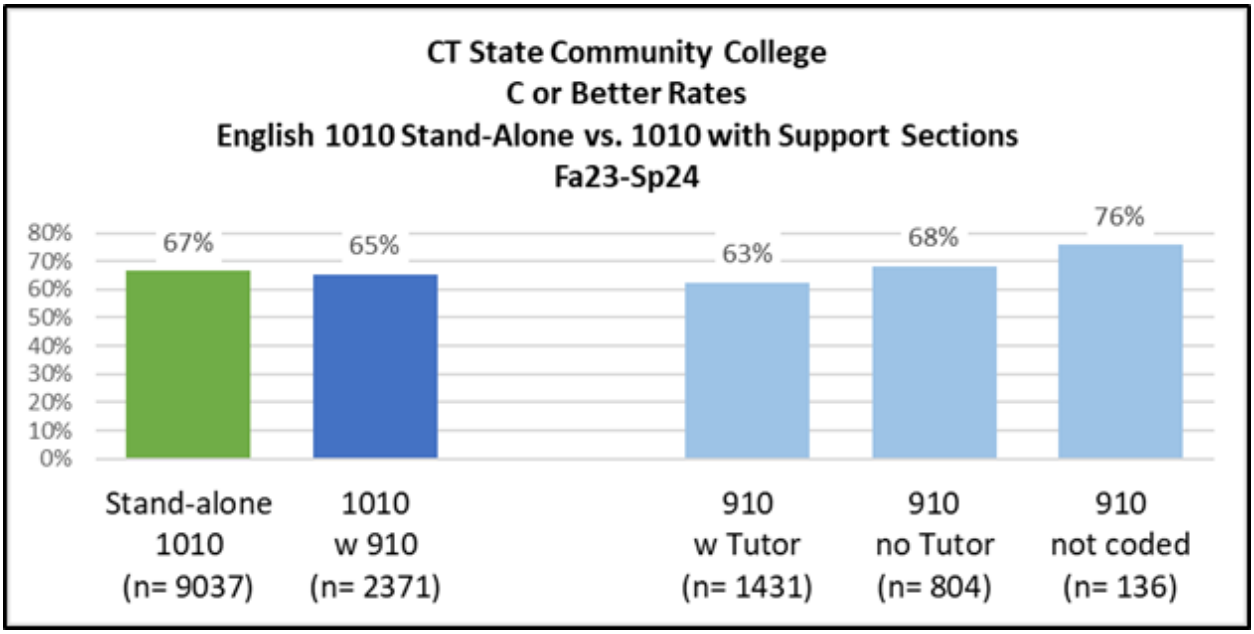
On January 23, 2025, CT State will sponsor an ACME Summit to share our data and learnings and provide a forum for its faculty and staff to engage on how to reinvigorate instructional practices related to developmental education reform and identify innovations, resources, and supports needed to continuously improve our student outcomes related to alignment and completion of college English and math. Learnings and recommendations from the Summit will be shared with the Board of Regents in a spring 2025 meeting and provide a venue to request any potential suggested updates or adjustments to the ACME Policy.

ACME Outcomes To Date



Being that Connecticut State Community College became a singly accredited institution in the fall of 2023, since the implementation of the ACME Policy the data above shows:

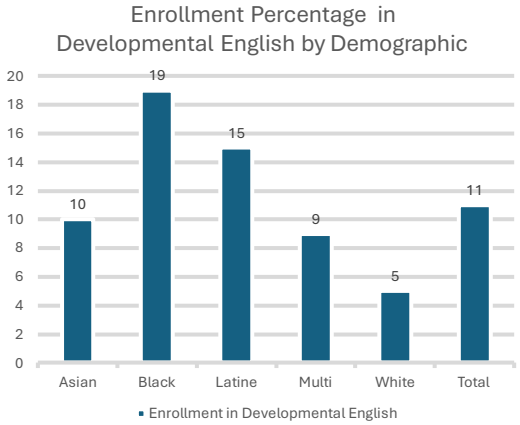
- There is an upward trend in ACME students' retention rate in the subsequent spring semester, hovering at 78%.
- There is an upward trend in ACME students' passing college level English in the first year at 49%.
- There is a decreasing trend of ACME students passing college level math in the first year at 25%.
- This decreasing trend in math may be misleading as it comes at a time when there has been declining enrollment in college level math courses.
- In looking at the overall data, ACME students who co-enrolled in CCS 1001 College and Career Success and ENG 1010 and 910 and a college level math course with support, were retained in the spring of 2024 level at an 83% rate. Of those who were co-enrolled in the fall semester in CCS 1001, 61% earned college level English credits in the first year and 33% earned college level math credits.

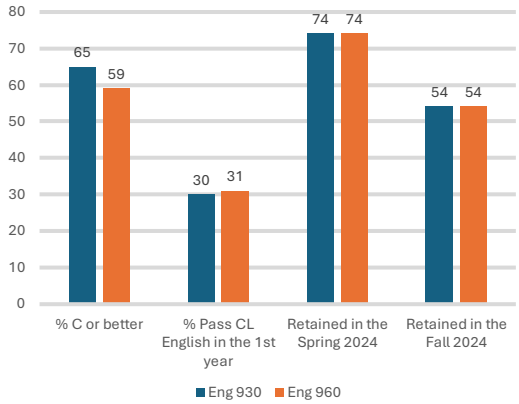


- Preliminary data in 2023- 2024 shows students who enroll in the corequisite support for ENG 1010 with ENG 910 perform similarly to those who enroll in the stand-alone ENG 1010 with a 65% pass rate with a C or higher compared to a 67% rate.
- Interestingly, students enrolled in ENG 1010 and ENG 910 without an embedded tutor outperformed students who enrolled in ENG 1010 and ENG 910 with an embedded tutor at 68% pass rate with a C or higher compared to a 63% rate.

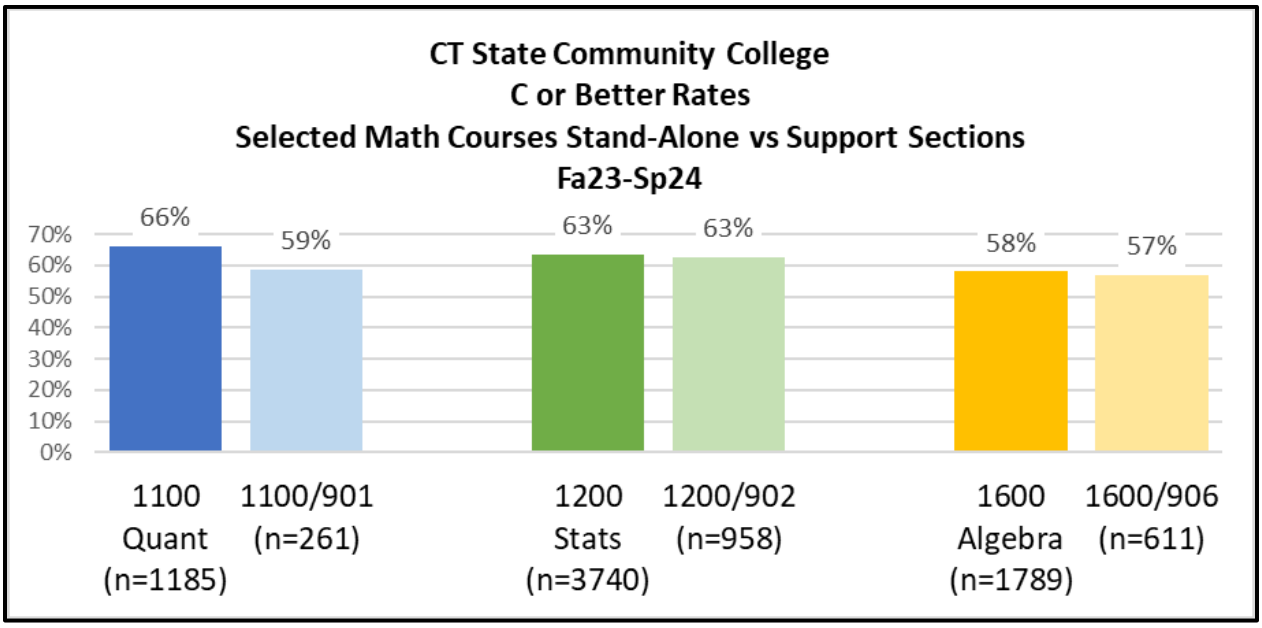
- As noted, this trend related to determining the impact of embedded tutors may be misleading as several student records were not coded, thus we are unable to accurately enter their data as to if they were in an embedded tutor section or not; thus, the data may be different pending accurate coding.
- In reviewing the disaggregated data, demographic differences exist in student outcomes. Thirty eight percent Black ACME students passed a college level English with a C or higher in the first year versus 49% of all ACME students.
  Full time ACME students passed college level English with a C or higher at a rate of 58%, outperforming the average by 11%, whereas part time ACME students passed college English at a rate of 32% in the first year, with a 17% opportunity gap compared to all ACME students. It is also significant to note that Black students are significantly more likely to be PT(53%) vs. Hispanic (46%) or white (38%) new students. Among new FT students 20% do not take an English class in their 1st semester, but among PT students, 50% do not take an English class in their 1st semester.
- Data related to the success of fall 2023 students who go on to take ENG 1020, 1030, and 1080 has been collected. However, in the years ahead, data must continue to be reviewed related to the success rates of students in subsequent courses that require a college level English course as a prerequisite.
- College-wide training of embedded tutors should also be conducted to determine if investment in embedded tutors is warranted in the future scale of the ACME policy.

Black and Latine Disproportionality Enroll in Developmental English





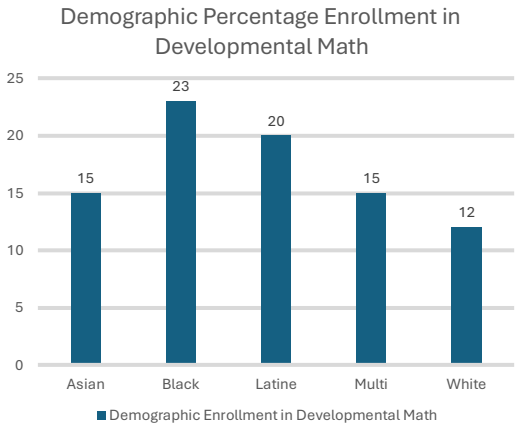
- In 2023- 2024, the college continued to offer ENG 930, Introduction to College Reading and Writing and ENG 960, Introduction to College Writing to students who were placed in these courses and did not successfully challenge out of them.
- Data shows Black and Latine students have a higher rate of being in these courses at 19% and 15% respectively, versus 5% for white students.
- Students taking ENG 930 had a 65% passing with a C or higher grade and ENG 960 students saw a 59% passing rate with a C or higher grade.
- Students taking ENG 930 and ENG 960 had a 30% and 31% rate for passing college level English in the first year, versus students who enrolled in corequisite ENG 1010 and ENG 910 at 49%.
- Spring retention rates for students taking ENG 930 and ENG 960 of 74% versus ACME students who enrolled in corequisites of 78%.

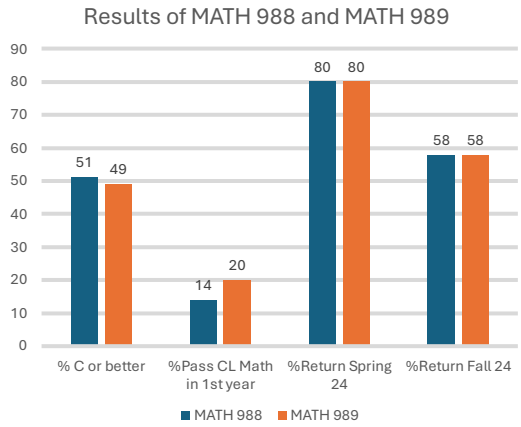


- Since the roll out of ACME in 2023-2024, similar student outcomes are being shown between ACME students who enrolled in MAT 1200 and MAT 902 and students who enrolled in the stand-alone MAT 1200, with a 63% pass rate with a C or better for both types of enrollments.
- Similarly, ACME students enrolling in MAT 1600 and MAT 906 and students enrolling in standalone MAT 1600 experienced similar outcomes with a 57% and 58% pass rates with a C or higher.
- Meanwhile, ACME students enrolled in MAT 1100 and MAT 901 had a 59% pass rate with a C or higher, compared to students enrolled in the MAT 1000 standalone option who experienced a comparable 66% pass rate.

- In reviewing the disaggregated data, full time ACME students passed a college level math course in the first year at a rate of 34% versus the average ACME student at 26%. Meanwhile part time ACME students passed a college level math course in the first year at a 14% rate.
- Interestingly, students who co-enrolled in the corequisite math course and CCS 1001 in the spring semester saw student outcomes of 40% of students achieving a passing grade of C or higher versus the traditional pass rate of 26%.

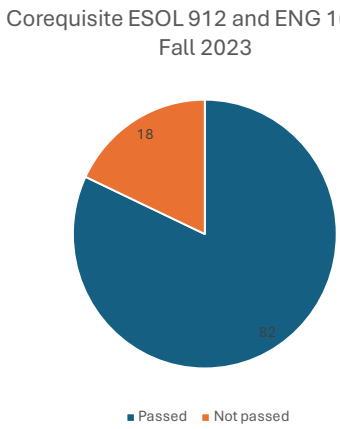
Black and Latine Students Enroll Disproportionally in Developmental Math

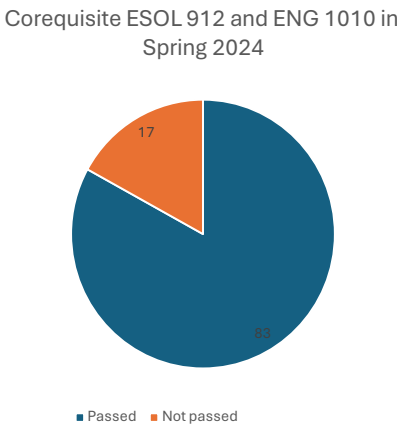




- In 2023- 2024, the college continued to offer MAT 988, Elementary Algebra Intensive and MAT 989, Elementary Algebra to students with a GPA less than 2.8 and who did not meet the college-level threshold for other placement multiple measures such as SAT, ACT, GED, Accuplacer, and ALEKS PPL scores.
- Data shows Black and Latine students have a higher rate of enrollment at 23% and 20% respectively, versus 12% for white students.
- Students taking MAT 988 had a 51% passing with a C or higher grade and MAT 989 students saw a 49% passing rate with a C or higher grade.
- ACME students taking MAT 988 and MAT 989 had a 14% and 20% rate for passing college level math in the first year, versus students who enrolled in corequisite math at 26%.
- Spring retention rates for ACME students taking MAT 988 and MAT 989 of 80% versus ACME students who enrolled in corequisites of 78%.

ESOL Corequisite Results Show Promise





- Unlike Math or English, Public Act 12-40 (the precursor to ACME) did not address English as a Second Language instruction
- The ESOL ACME team implemented a core sequence, corequisite course, and the Advanced English Certificate across 9 campuses while maintaining campus-specific needs
- ESOL ACME has been working closely with the Director of APR to develop common learning outcomes and assessment methods
- ESOL ACME has aggressively ramped up professional development efforts to ensure that campus staff are able to identify English Language Learners and meet their academic and wraparound needs
- In the fall semester, the corequisite ESOL 912 and ENG 1010, 82% of students passed the course with a C or higher.
- In the spring semester, the corequisite ESOL 912 and ENG 1010, 83% of students passed the course with a C or higher.
- On balance, ELLs pass their non-ESOL courses at the same rate as the general population.
- Non-ESOL seats filled by ELLs are far more likely (73%) than the general population (56%) to be in traditional, in-person sections rather than online or hybrid. They pass these in-person courses at about the same rate (71%) as the general population (69%).

Initial Recommendations

- Adjust the ACME policy to reflect additional flexibility needed in implementation, including lessons learned and timing needed to make curricular changes to fully implement corequisites.
- Review and implement uniform placement protocols that are consistent across all campuses.
- Emphasize providing professional development for the readers of challenge essays, funding for ALEKs placement, and providing enough resources to cover the implementation.
- Explore the feasibility of whether to invest in developing a guided placement tool or app for students.
- Develop academic program pages that provide a course sequencing prioritizing college level math and English during the first year or first 24 credits.
- Update program pages to better reflect the appropriate college math pathway versus "MATH 1000 or higher" or "MATH 1100 or higher" for many programs.
- Invest in ongoing professional development for faculty teaching co-requisite courses, including training related to active learning, universal design, trauma informed teaching, and focused training on neurodivergence.
- Invest in professional development for embedded peer and professional tutors aligned to CRLA standards.
- Invest in transitional support programming, including building summer bridge programs to support underprepared students.
- Explore providing expanded support for traditional first semester general education courses such as general psychology, anatomy and physiology, interpersonal communications etc.
- Determine whether ESOL Core Framework not tied to corequisites should be under the ACME policy or if another policy specific to their student needs is more appropriate.
- Develop dialogue with secondary providers to better prepare high school students to transition to college, to provide a venue for corequisite concurrent and dual enrollment and/or to discuss additional multiple measures to be implemented into our placement protocols.
- Develop an ACME Dashboard to track annual data and provide updated annual reports to the college and the Board of Regents.