

*The History
of the
Underprepared Student Initiative*

The year 2000, indeed, deserves to be lauded. The typical lifespan rose to age seventy-seven, Tiger Woods became the youngest player to win the grand slam in golf, the dot.com bubble burst, and Y2K did not result in a complete meltdown via computer access.

On the Paradise Valley Community College campus, leadership recognized that a growing number of students were entering the campus underprepared and began addressing their needs via strategic issue (#4)

In 2001, Sally Rings wrote a paper researching the underprepared student on the PVCC campus. At the same time, the Under-prepared Student Initiative Committee was formed. Its seventeen members were Marianne Auten, Bob Bendotti (Co-Chair), Tom Butler, Cynthia Burns, Rick Conchos, Renee Cornell, Maggie Cullip, David Gerkin (Co-Chair) Joyce Janiga, Maribeth Marquard, Diana Mitchell, Vanessa Montgomery, Sally Rings, Michaelle Shadburne, Fred Wieck, Shelle Witten, and Sonya Woodard. As late as 2015, Marianne Auten, Maribeth Marquard, and Michaelle Shadburne were still involved.

- **CO-CHAIRS: BOB BENDOTTI & DAVID GERKIN (2001 -2005)**

Each successive year, the USI team undertook defining student needs, developing strategic plans, and researching opportunities.

From 2002 – 2005, work was done on the advocacy paper. At the same time, small committees were formed with each given an issue to research. Some focused on placement tests, others on late enrollment, and yet others concentrated on providing advisors a list of which classes were best suited for a student who tested into below 100 levels classes.

In 2002, the President's Advance included a special breakout session focusing on the under-prepared student.

- **CO-CHAIRS: BOB BENDOTTI & SALLY RINGS (2005 – 2007)**

In 2006, the USI wrote a definition of under-prepared students: *Students who do not possess the requisite knowledge and/or skills necessary to perform college-level work and who may have unrealistic beliefs about how to be successful in college.*

In 2006, the USI committee, influenced by JoAnn Wright from Maraine Valley Community College, developed an action plan, later called the Student Success Pilot Project (SSPP) meant for students who would enroll in 2007. It...

1. Required course placement testing for all first-time, degree-seeking students. These students should complete all three placement tests (English, math, and reading).
2. Required integrated orientation, advising, and registration program. During the integrated session, students should set goals using iGoal, a newly developed web-based PVCC system for helping students develop, track, and evaluate their goals.
3. Required an exciting and innovative college success course. COL101 is a one-credit, eight-week course that should transfer to state universities and should be taught by PVCC faculty (FT and AF) and staff who have completed the required training and possess a master's degree.

- **CO-CHAIRS: BOB BENDOTTI & FRED WEICK (2007 – 2009)**

In 2007, at the end of the first semester, SSPP, now referred to as iStartSmart, was evaluated. The results “showed to be around 80 percent positive. When 335 of the students were asked if the class has better prepared them for success in college, 288 students either agreed or strongly agreed while only 47 disagreed or strongly disagreed. When asked if they would recommend this course to other new-to-college students, 261 students agreed or strongly agreed while only 74 either disagreed or strongly disagreed” (Bisel).

2007 - the USI committee received an Systemic Award for iStartSmart as well as incorporating the iGoal program.

2008 – 2013, the campus Strategic Plan listed Developmental Education among its nine diverse learning opportunities and aimed to support underprepared initiatives with a special emphasis on developmental mathematics.

- **CO-CHAIRS: MARIBETH MARQUARD & PAMELA OSBACK (2009 – 2011)**

2010 - The Under-prepared Student Initiative begins to focus on offering workshops (staff training) such as the Fall Forum offered on Friday, October 22 with breakout sessions and with Robin Ozz as keynote speaker.

- Maribeth Marquard, Pamela Osback, Christine Tabone attended the first MCLI summer institute.

2011 – USI participates in PVCC’s SWOT analysis focusing on services that meet the needs of students once they’re enrolled and class is meeting, with an emphasis on evening students.

- **CHAIRS: PAMELA OSBACK (2012 – 2015)**

2012 -2013 Year-End Accomplishment Report states that “students who successfully completed a student success class (CPD or AAA115) had persistence rates higher than non-enrollees.”

2012 – the USI committee sponsored a half-day conference for adjunct faculty on best practices at the college and in developmental classes.

2013 – USI published its first newsletter, Editor-in-chief Jacqueline Fernandez. In spring, it is geared toward instructors. In fall, it is geared toward students.

2014 - 2015 – USI’s new website was published. USI took a more active role in Learning Week, making it a goal to always present a workshop.

2015 – 2016 -

ONGOING PRACTICES

Maricopa Summer Institute

2010 – Maribeth Marquard, Pamela Osback, Christine Tabone

2011 –Diane Chapman, Art Coleman, Richard Morales, Amy Woodbeck, Sonya Woodward

2012 – Marianne Auten, Mary Early, Leila Palis, Sylvia Frost

2013 – Lori Espinoza, Jacquie Fernandez, Bahman Maneshni, Stephanie Polliard

2014 – Paula Crossman, Leonard Macias, David Pegram

2015 – Renee Cornell, Michelle Marion, Raji Lauffer

Maricopa Summer Institute 2.0

2014 – Mary Early, Sylvia Frost

Bisel, Jessica. "Students Review iStartSmart after its Debut Semester." *Puma Press*

December 2007. Web. April 2015.

<http://www2.pvc.maricopa.edu/puma/dec07/startsmart.html>