San Diego State University began its Early Start Program in summer 2009. The program was mandatory for local admission area first-time freshmen with English remediation requirements and Eligibility Index scores between 2900-3399. The admit to enroll “show” rate for that group was 50.6% compared to 53.7% for a similar fall 2008 cohort.

This summer (2010) our Early Start Program was mandatory for all local admission area first-time freshmen with English and/or math remediation requirements, regardless of their Eligibility Index scores. The admit to enroll “show” rate for this group was 78% (this rate is incorrect, we are recalculating and it will probably be closer to the traditional show rate) compared to 43.7% for a similar fall 2009 cohort and 46.0% for a similar fall 2008 cohort.

San Diego State’s Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP) also offers a Summer Bridge/Early Start Program during the same 5-week summer session period. EOP selects both local admission area and non-local admission area first-time freshmen with remediation requirements to participate in this program. A substantial number of students selected are provided residence hall accommodation at no cost to the student.

Program Description

This summer’s program, which we plan to replicate in future summers, consisted of a 5-week session during the second summer term. The 5-week session dates were July 12 through August 13 with classes meeting in the mornings on Monday through Friday. All remedial courses meet for 45 hours during the 5-week session with additional mandatory tutoring hours for all students in remedial courses.
As has been the case for many years now, our remedial courses are taught by San Diego Community College (SDCC) faculty on the SDSU campus, with oversight and coordination provided by San Diego State writing and math faculty coordinators.

Students with remediation requirements in English or math, but not both, are also provided a 5-week, 100-level General Education course. For financial aid purposes, the 3-unit remedial course plus the 3-unit General Education course provide the minimum 6-units required to receive financial aid.

Because San Diego State's summer session is taught through state-support on a fee per unit basis, students who need only one remedial course, and who prefer not to take an elective General Education course, are charged for just the 3-unit remedial course. The cost of the 3 units is approximately one-half the cost of the regular fall and spring 0.1 - 6.0 fee cost.

**Placement**

The Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies has responsibility for both writing and math remediation. The remedial writing and math courses offered by SDCC are the equivalent of the following SDSU courses:

**Writing-**

- RWS 92A Developmental Writing: Fundamentals of Writing
- RWS 92B Developmental Writing: Intermediate

**Math-**

- GMS 90 Fundamentals of Mathematics
- GMS 91 Intermediate Algebra

Students with writing remediation requirements are “force” registered into an RWS 92A credit/no credit course. Students who earn credit in the course satisfy their writing remediation requirement. If students do not earn credit in their RWS 92A course equivalent, they are force registered into the RWS 92B course the following semester.

Students with math remediation requirements are force registered into the GMS 90 course equivalent if they have an ELM score below 41. If their ELM score is between 41 and 49, they are force registered into the GMS 91 course equivalent. Students who do not earn credit in GMS 90 must repeat the course until they earn credit for it. Once they earn credit in the GMS 90 course equivalent, they are force registered into GMS 91 and must earn credit in that course to clear their math remediation requirement.
Online Course Development

San Diego State is currently developing online 92A and GMS 90 courses. Both courses will have associated tutorial modules. We hope to pilot these courses in summer 2011. Once developed and piloted, we plan to offer these courses primarily to non-local area first-time freshmen admits who have indicated an intent to enroll at SDSU and have paid their intent to enroll deposit.

Student Services

Early Start students have access to the full range of student services that are provided during the academic year including Student Health Services and Counseling and Psychological Services. Early Start students also have access to Student Disability Services which provides opportunity for these students to obtain a disability assessment to determine the level and type of disability accommodation needed. This early assessment is a critical component for Early Start student success. Finally, the Office of Student Life and Leadership and the Cross-Cultural Center provide Early Start students with the opportunity to connect with fellow students and learn about the over 200 registered student clubs and organizations on campus.

Communications

Local admission area students who have not cleared their remediation at the time of admission are informed in their admission letter that they must attend San Diego State’s Early Start Program if they do not clear their remediation requirements before the beginning day of the Early Start Program. After the intent to enroll process is complete and the May EPT/ELM test results are known, Early Start Program students receive an individualized email letter indicating the courses in which they will be computer registered. In addition, the letter also provides information related to fees and mandatory New Student/Early Start Program Orientation.

At the same time that Early Start Program students are provided with the above email letter, parents of Early Start students receive an individualized letter specifying the courses in which their students will be computer registered. The letter also provides information related to fees and mandatory New Student/Early Start Program Orientation. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend Parent Orientation which runs concurrently with New Student/Early Start Program Orientation.
Mandatory New Student/Early Start Program Orientation provides students and their parents with a full day of “success at SDSU” experience. At the 8:00 A.M. check-in, each student is provided with a Personal Information Sheet listing required remediation and foundational General Education in the semester sequence in which they will be “force” registered. Students are also provided Major Academic Plans with the complete four-year sequence of courses students needed to graduate in four years.

Local admission area principals and head counselors were informed of the Early Start Program prior to its inception in summer 2009. The program is also highlighted and explained at local high school counselor workshops. Further, each school district receives a first-time freshman profile of their enrollees by high school which provides performance data for their students, including those students entering with remediation requirements.

Appeals

Appeals for exceptions to the Early Start Program are handled by the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs who also receives all undergraduate admission appeals.