

Cuyamaca Link

A First Year Early Matriculation, Student Retention, & Success Program

2011 - 2012

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Cuyamaca Link

Early matriculation, student retention, and success programs are not a new idea; in California there are a number of community colleges who have successfully institutionalized early matriculation programs with their feeder high schools. With this in mind, in the fall of 2008 we began to develop Cuyamaca Link, a program specifically designed to serve our local high schools, community, and our College.

The first cohort of Cuyamaca Link began in the Fall semester 2009, and it was comprised of 304 first year students. At the completion of the following Spring semester 2010, we were left with 253 students who completed the program. In our second year, with the addition of Steele Canyon high school to Cuyamaca Link, our numbers grew to 449 participants for the Fall semester 2010.

In preparation for our third year of Cuyamaca Link (2011-12), program requirements were modified to improve upon previous student retention and success data in Cuyamaca Link. This program description reflects all current Cuyamaca Link requirements for 2011-12.

What is Cuyamaca Link?

Cuyamaca Link is a first-year early matriculation, retention, and student success program set up between Cuyamaca College and our five local feeder high schools:

- Valhalla
- Steele Canyon
- Mt. Miguel
- Granite Hills
- Monte Vista

The Cuyamaca Link program consists of students completing their final year of school at any of the five afore mentioned high schools. These students plan to attend Cuyamaca College, have signed a Cuyamaca Link contract agreeing to meet all the program requirements and attend the three links at their high school.

Cuyamaca Link participants who meet all program requirements are provided with priority registration during their first year at Cuyamaca College (priority registration is only available at Cuyamaca). Participants receive a temporary

Cuyamaca Link Objectives

*Increase first year student retention and success at Cuyamaca College

*Eliminate barriers during transition from high school to college for under-represented student populations and first generation college students

*Require registration for English/ESL and math for timely sequencing through basic skill levels, thus improving success in future courses

*Establish student support network via required Personal Development Counseling 124 course

*Provide counselor assistance for appropriate course selection each semester and establish a long term educational plan

*Eliminate overloading of units by first year students

*Programmatic planning for timely completion of academic goals

*Compile retention and success data for each cohort

hold placed on their record each semester to ensure program requirements are met.

The Cuyamaca Link requirements are as follows:

- Attend and complete all three links at their high school:
 1. College and program orientation,
 2. English or ESL and math assessment (for any DSP&S student the assessment is at CC)
 3. Advisement/Registration
- Register for the appropriate courses in English/ESL and math during their first year at Cuyamaca College based on assessment results
- Register for PDC 124 in the Fall semester
- English/ESL, math & PDC 124 will be taken only at Cuyamaca College
- Register for elective courses based on their academic goal and math, English/ESL placement level
- Do not exceed 15 semester units per semester during first year (no exceptions)
- Sign up and attend the Spring Priority Registration Workshop
- Create long term educational plan with counselor for intended academic goal

Prior to the beginning of their second semester at Cuyamaca College, to receive priority registration for the Spring semester Link participants must sign up and attend the Spring Priority Registration Workshop held on our campus. At the workshop, participants will register for the spring semester via WebAdvisor and continue their math, English or ESL sequence. Courses for major preparation and general education will be selected with counselor assistance. Students who do not sign up and attend the Spring Priority Registration Workshop will not be given priority registration.

How is student retention and success increased with Cuyamaca Link?

The student requirements in the Cuyamaca Link program are specifically set up to increase student retention and success. The student outcomes include the following:

- Registration for appropriate levels of math, English or ESL during the first two semesters in College allows for timely sequencing through math and English/ESL levels

- Eliminate taking too many classes and overwhelming themselves by placing a unit maximum of 15 taken per semester in their first year of college
- Require Basic Skill students to register for English/ESL and math courses according to their placement level and continue the sequence the following semester
- Personal Development Counseling 124 course will assist with career choices, study skills, and learning strategies in college
- Receive academic advising during registration for each semester during initial year in college
- Avoid registration for courses not required for intended academic goal at college, thus streamlining the completion of certificates, associate degrees, and transfer to four-year institutions
- PDC 124 courses for Cuyamaca Link will be working in conjunction with the program to assist in creation of support network and sense of community for participants
- With the cooperation of our Disabled Student Programs & Services, accommodations are provided for Cuyamaca Link students
- Early access to matriculation and counseling services allows students to experience a smoother transition from high school to college and eliminates many barriers students face in their transition from our schools. A smooth transition is especially important for first-generation college students and underrepresented student populations

Our Campus also benefits from:

- Required registration of Cuyamaca Link students in basic skills courses will result in greater success once they are in college level courses
- Link students completing matriculation at our top feeder high schools in March, April and May, helps alleviate overcrowding of our student services during our peak periods. Early registration workshops in October and November will accomplish the same during the spring semester
- Programmatic planning for timely completion of academic goals provides Cuyamaca College the opportunity to continuously serve more students
- Continue to foster mutually beneficial relationships with our local high schools and the Grossmont Union High School District