

ACADEMIC SENATE  
SANTA ANA COLLEGE

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**Resolution:** SP09.01  
Freshman Experience Program

**Passed:** March 10, 2009

**Date:** February 24, 2009  
**Subject:** Freshman Experience Program  
**Mover:** Jeff McMillan  
**Seconder:** Bonnie Jaros

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program, a learning communities program, begun in 1996 as part of a Title III Hispanic Serving Institution Grant and institutionalized in compliance with the grant in 1999, **has served over 9,000 students** since its inception;

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **has increased student persistence rates** by an average of 11% over those in matched control groups and by 22% over all students since 2003;

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **has increased student pass rates and course completion** since 1996 **and the percentage of students completing two-semester pre-collegiate and collegiate course sequences within one year in Math and English** since 2003 as compared to the control group;

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **has increased AA Degree attainment** by students in the program, more than doubling the rate of the control group, **and transfer rates** of students in the program as compared to those in the control group;

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **has increased student satisfaction** as measured by the Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement and the 2008 Santa Ana College Student Satisfaction Survey;

ACADEMIC SENATE  
SANTA ANA COLLEGE

**Resolution:** SP09.01

Page 2

**Passed:** March 10, 2009

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **has worked with and trained more than 120 faculty members** since 1996, **providing ongoing, effective, reflective, proactive staff development for faculty**, including specific training in student learning outcomes, reading strategies, integrated academics and student services, metacognitive strategies, and in Spring 2009, strategies for increasing student engagement and motivation;

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **has forged synergistic institutional relationships** with the Basic Skills Initiative, MESA, the Center for Teacher Education, the University Transfer Center, the Honors Program, the Nursing Department, U-Link, Puente, Middle College High School, the Pathway Program, Project Escalera and the RSCCD Research Department **and has positively affected campus climate** through strong, collaborative links between counseling, Math and English;

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **has provided leadership and training for learning community efforts at many other institutions**, including direct in-services and trainings at eighteen local and statewide colleges, sponsorship of three conferences for local and statewide colleges and presentations at numerous state, national and international conferences, **has received an exemplary program award by the State Academic Senate and has brought positive recognition to Santa Ana College;**

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program, to support the college and the District with critical cost-cutting measures, **has reduced its operating budget by 60% since the Fall 2008;**

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program **will operate at almost no cost to the General Fund for the Spring 2009** through collaboration with the Basic Skills Initiative;

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program, through the increased retention and persistence rates of its students, **generates approximately \$225,000 per semester in FTES;** and

ACADEMIC SENATE  
SANTA ANA COLLEGE

**Resolution:** SP09.01

Page 3

**Passed:** March 10, 2009

***Whereas,*** the Freshman Experience Program has become part of the institutional and cultural fabric of the Santa Ana College;

***Be it resolved as follows:*** That the Academic Senate at Santa Ana College, acknowledging the added value that the Freshman Experience Program brings to both student and faculty participants, believes that the program must be maintained, even in light of current budgetary circumstances, and supports the continued work of the Freshman Experience Program at Santa Ana College.