

Big Bend Community College

College Success Skills Focus Group Spring 2010

The purpose of the focus group was to get students' input on College Success Skills (CSS) and what was helping students succeed in their academic goals. Students were asked what they believe will improve students' success and progress to achieve their goals at BBCC. Big Bend's Achieving the Dream Coach and Data Facilitator facilitated the CSS Focus Group with students currently taking the CSS 101 class.

Twenty-three students in the Focus Group were pursuing the following degrees or certificates at BBCC: Medical Assistant, Accounting transferring to Central Washington University, AA in Early childhood Education, Accounting, AAS transfer for a Radiology Degree, AAS transfer to Washington State University, RN Transfer, Advanced Nursing, RN, Nursing, Electrical program, Computer Lab Technician, Industrial Lab Technician, Physical Therapy transferring to Eastern Washington University, Commercial Pilot, and Auto Mechanic.

Some students were advised they had to take the CSS class, others weren't, and one student took the class after hearing how successful a friend was after taking a similar class at another college. One student said, "I had to take this class because I was on probation. My grades are also up and it was wakeup call to take school seriously". But students felt that the class was not for everyone.

Students said the most beneficial aspects of the CSS class were the stress test that helped them to learn more about themselves, reading, class registration, group activities, time management, how to communicate with instructors, there wasn't much homework, the notes were basic, the text book was easy to read, and they learned how to use a planner. Students said they were looking forward to taking the Myers Briggs personality test. They believed the skills they gained in the class would not only benefit them in future classes but also in life.

About half of the students liked working in groups. They felt working in groups was important although the process may have slowed things down. They found it interesting that not everyone thought the same way and had different points of view. Sometimes one person may have picked up on something that someone else missed.

The only thing students wished they could have changed was the order in which things were taught. They felt these subjects should be first: note taking, reading, dealing with stress, test-taking, learning styles, goals, time and money management, and how to communicate with instructors. The one thing that should have been stressed is "math is so hard".