

SITE VISIT REPORT
MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE, FLORIDA
COLLEGE AND CAREER TRANSITION INITIATIVE (CCTI)
TRANSITION TO HEALTH CAREERS

Site visitor: Elisabeth Barnett, UIUC
Dates: November 20 and 21, 2003
Principal partners: Miami-Dade College
Medical Center Campus
Kendall Campus
Felix Varela High School
Baptist Hospital of Miami

Program Abstract:

The partners involved in this project have developed a program in which a cohort of high school students will take all pre-requisite courses needed to enter college nursing or allied health programs. They will receive both high school and college credit for these courses. Systems are in place to help them to acquire the level of English and math required to enter the program, and they will participate in an intensive summer internship at a local hospital. The students will form a learning community that will offer additional support and enrichment opportunities.

Miami-Dade College

The state of Florida is one of the most proactive in the nation in developing strategies to help students in their transition from high school to college. They have especially strong, state-supported programs to encourage students to earn college credit while in high school with participation by 30% of all college freshmen (see www.facts.org). Mechanisms that encourage a smooth transition to college include advanced placement (AP), dual enrollment, tech prep, college-level examination program (CLEP), and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma program. Through these and other programs, Florida community colleges are active providers of educational opportunities for high schools students wanting to get a head start on college.

Miami-Dade Community College first opened in September 1960 as a comprehensive community college serving Miami and Dade County. Dade County is home to about 14% of the Florida's inhabitants and has been identified as the poorest metropolitan county in the nation. With an overall population of over 2,200,000 in 2001, 57% of Dade County residents identify themselves as Hispanic and 20% as African American. Since its founding, the college has grown into a multi-campus institution that awards more associates degrees than any other in the nation. Its mission is "to provide accessible, affordable, high quality education by keeping the learner's needs at the center of decision-making and working in partnership with its dynamic, multi-cultural community." The college changed its name to Miami-Dade College (MDC) in August, 2003 reflecting the recent development of baccalaureate degree programs.

The college has six campuses and numerous outreach centers, and enrolls the most Hispanic students and second most African American students of any college or university in the United States. **Chart A** shows the number of faculty and students connected with the college.

Chart A

MDC Students and Faculty (2000-2001)	
Total credit students, all campuses	71,616
Total non-credit students, all campuses	70,759
Total students served	145,097
Full time faculty	686
Part time faculty	2,502

The college has embraced the learning community model as a way to increase student success and retention. Professors participating in this approach team-design and sometimes team-teach courses that are offered in pairs for students who move through the curriculum as a cohort. The CCTI project at Miami-Dade College builds upon this experience.

Health Occupations

In 2000, the U.S. Department of Education recognized the MDC Medical Center Campus as first in the nation in degrees granted in both nursing and in other health professions. In addition, they have received multiple awards related to the provision of outstanding educational opportunities to Hispanic and African American students, as well as for leadership in workforce development and use of technology.

The Medical Center Campus offers a range of degrees and certificates in the health occupations as shown in **Chart B**. The Nursing Program is one of the largest in the country, with 500 graduates last year. The CCTI project was initiated by representatives of the Medical Center Campus, home of all nursing and allied health programs of the college, and will be conducted in cooperation with the faculty and student support staff of Kendall Campus.

Chart B

Programs Offered at Medical Center Campus	
Nursing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nursing- Associate Degree and other options ▪ Midwifery- Associate of Science ▪ Practical Nursing and Medical Assisting- Certificate programs
Allied Health	Associate of Science in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dental Hygiene

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical Therapy Assistant ▪ Diagnostic Medical Sonography ▪ Physician Assistant ▪ Emergency Medical Services ▪ Radiation ▪ Therapy Technology ▪ Health Information Management ▪ Radiography ▪ Histotechnology ▪ Respiratory Care Therapist ▪ Medical Laboratory Technology ▪ Veterinary Technology ▪ Opticianry
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Felix Varela High School is located in the southern part of Dade County. It opened its doors very recently, the first high school in the county founded in the 21st century. A total of 4,687 students were enrolled during the 2002-2003 year, making it the largest school in Dade County. The student body is very diverse, with about 80% speaking English as a second language. The school uses an academy structure with all students selecting from among six academies. Each academy has a number of career pathways that may be followed, leading to careers in new and emerging professions. Their Health Sciences pathway is “designed to prepare persons with competencies required to assist qualified health professionals in providing diagnostic, therapeutic, preventative, restorative and rehabilitative services to patients in health care facilities, in homes and in the community.”

Baptist Health South Florida is the largest non-profit health care provider in the region. Baptist Hospital of Miami is one of a number of affiliated hospitals. Established in 1960, the hospital offers a full range of medical and technological services and has 551 beds. Over 30,000 people are hospitalized there yearly and about 86,000 receive care in their emergency center facilities. The hospital is pro-actively seeking ways to address the shortage of health care personnel, especially nurses, through the provision of scholarships to their employees and other qualified candidates, and through initiatives such as CCTI. Their active volunteer program helps with recruitment as well, with many of their volunteers coming from the teen population. Specific roles have been developed for teen volunteers, with a particular focus on familiarizing them with health career opportunities.

The CCTI Program

Representatives of the Medical Center Campus of MDC wrote the CCTI grant proposal in the Spring of 2003 because of a particular interest in targeting high school students interested in a health careers, and assisting them to make a smooth and accelerated transition into the Nursing and Allied Health Programs at MDC. One of the reasons that high school students may get “lost” in the transition to nursing and allied health programs is that there are extensive pre-requisites. Students entering nursing must successfully complete eight college level courses before being accepted for admission to the program.

MDC and the other partners proposed to create a learning community in which a cohort of about 25 students from Felix Varela High School's Health Academy would engage in a series of activities designed to promote their educational and career success. Extensive work is currently underway to develop a full complement of program components. They envision a system in which 10th grade students will be recruited to apply for entry into the program as eleventh graders. Once enrolled they will take two courses each of the following four semesters, allowing them to graduate with eight college courses completed for which they will receive both high school and college credit.

The two courses per semester will be developed using a learning community framework, with the teachers co-developing the curriculum and probably co-teaching as well. All courses will be those that must be successfully completed before entering a Nursing or Allied Health Program at MDC. The first semester's courses will be integrated Chemistry and English. While Medical Center Campus will provide health related coursework and overall project oversight, Kendall will be responsible for providing the courses offered to high school students in general education. They have extensive experience with offering dual credit courses and with the use of learning community frameworks.

During the summer between 11th and 12th grade, students will participate in a 6-week summer internship at Baptist Hospital, during which they will receive further exposure to the field of health care, opportunities to learn through hands-on experiences, and a stipend. In addition, all of the partners plan to offer workshops and other enriching experiences, and the students will have regular opportunities to use the SAIL Lab at Kendall College to receive tutoring and other assistance.

Students will be carefully selected in order to be able to succeed in this rigorous program. Admission criteria established by the project advisory committee include the following:

- Interest in pursuing a health career program at MDC.
- A passing grade on the FCAT.
- An un-weighted GPA of 3.0.
- An acceptable score on the PASS (pre-placement practice test).
- A passing score on the required College Placement Test (CPT).
- Letters of recommendation from a teacher or guidance counselor and an employer or volunteer supervisor.
- An essay explaining the reasons why the student wishes to participate.
- An interview in which students give evidence of readiness to undertake this challenging program.

In the first year of program implementation, 25 high school seniors will enter the program. In the following year, a similar number of juniors will enter.

Early experience with student recruitment indicates that many potential candidates will need remediation in order to qualify for the program, especially to obtain the scores required on the PASS test. Plans are underway to arrange for students to regularly attend the Kendall Campus SAIL Lab to participate in self-paced tutorials to improve their

English and math skills. Those involved with the project are also looking for other ways to help students to improve their skills in order to enter the program.

The Planning Committee (Formerly Called Advisory Board)

The Planning Committee is comprised of the leadership of the three partnering organizations, along with faculty members and student support personnel. They have met as a full group once, but plan to meet about two times per semester to provide guidance to the program as it develops. A full list of Advisory Council members and their affiliations appears in **Appendix A**.

The project staff benefited greatly from their participation in the initial CCTI meeting in Phoenix in the summer of 2003. The group had an opportunity to get to know each other - and the project—better, and to begin a concrete planning process that has set the foundation for all subsequent action.

Implementation Plan

The program’s implementation plan is attached in **Appendix B**. It shows the way that each of the five CCTI outcomes will be addressed through program activities. To make it more useful for program monitoring purposes, additional columns have been added by program administrators showing target dates for activities, persons responsible, and follow up actions taken. Updated versions of the project’s implementation plan will be available on the League for Innovation in the Community College’s CCTI website as they are completed.

It has been decided that the current year (2003-2004 academic year) will be used to develop relationships with the partners and conduct planning activities, with students entering the program in the summer of 2004. A description of activities accomplished to date and the tentative plan of action for the future as described by Project Director Miriam Reyes in November 2003 were as follows:

Dates	Actions
July and August 2003	An initial round of student recruitment was undertaken. Targeted students were those currently participating in the Felix Varela Health Academy, with the academy faculty doing the initial pre-selection. Students were asked to go to the Kendall SAIL lab for college placement testing. Of those that went, only two passed both sub-tests. It was decided to more carefully plan the recruitment strategy.
September 2003	An advisory board was formed based on the CCTI criteria for membership. Planning activities were undertaken with the partners,

	<p>especially focusing on the student selection/admissions process.</p> <p>Program informational materials and forms were drafted.</p>
October and November 2003	<p>The advisory board met and established the selection criteria listed above. It was decided to pre-select a group of 40 to 50 11th graders in order to have 25 that would qualify to enter the program in summer 2004.</p> <p>Further planning activities were conducted.</p>
December 2003, January 2004	<p>Students will be recruited and given the PASS test.</p>
February-March 2004	<p>Those who do not do well on the PASS test will be given the opportunity for remediation. Students will re-take the PASS test after remediation.</p>
March-April 2004	<p>The College Placement Test will be administered.</p>
April 2004	<p>Applications will be screened; students will be interviewed by a committee of four representing each of the partners (Medical Campus and Kendall Campus of MDC, Varela High School and Baptist Hospital)</p>
May 2004	<p>A career fair will be offered at the high school for parents and prospective student candidates for upcoming years.</p>
June and July 2004	<p>Students will participate in summer internships at Baptist Hospital. These will last for six weeks with students at the hospital 10-15 hours a week. They will receive stipends of \$100 a week. During this period, they will rotate through several areas of the hospital, keep journals, and participate in seminars.</p>
August 2004	<p>Students will begin dual credit classes in Chemistry, English, and/or any other appropriate pre-requisite course.</p>

When the program is fully developed, there will be 25 11th graders and 25 12th graders involved each year. They will participate in four college-level courses per year. Discussions are currently underway regarding whether the courses will be taught on the Kendall Campus, or by Kendall faculty members at Felix Varela high school.

Leadership and Support

Project oversight for the MDC Medical Center Campus is provided by Dr. Frances Aronovitz who supervises the Project Director, Miriam Reyes, and by Dr. Susan Kah who oversees academic programs in general. Both of them were clearly very supportive of the effort, although they expressed some surprise regarding the amount of work that has been required to establish the program under the national CCTI guidelines. Their recent decision to add a full-time program coordinator to assist the project director with management duties is evidence of their commitment to the success of this project.

The initial motivation for undertaking this initiative was to look at ways to improve the pipeline between high schools and college nursing and allied health programs. Drs. Aronovitz and Kah expressed concerns about having an older, sometimes less well prepared, student population, and would like to attract a younger, more academically qualified enrollment. The average age of students in these programs is currently 28-35 years. They see this program as a pilot that may prove to be a model for further high school/college partnerships that improve the flow of recently graduated high school students into college programs in health careers. They also see this project as a way to reach out to the southern end of the county. It has additional value as a potential model for building further articulated programs with the Dade County Public Schools.

Project Director Miriam Reyes works half time on this project, while continuing to teach half time in the nursing program. She has been particularly effective at establishing good relationships among program partners, and maintains especially close communication with Marilyn Sims-Jones, Director of the Health Academy, and Melitta Auclair, Director of Education at Baptist Health. Much of the planning for this project has depended on the work of these three.

There is ample evidence of a strong commitment to the project at Felix Varela High School as well. As a career-oriented school, they see this program as a way to expand opportunities for students to progress into postsecondary education and better jobs, especially for those who may have a difficult time gaining access. They have begun discussing the program with parents and students. They believe that student interest is high, and that the program is perceived as a way to earn college credit and move more quickly into higher education.

The hospital is also very interested in this project as a dimension of their efforts to find and develop well-qualified staff. They will be especially involved in structuring a strong summer internship experience for the students and are putting a lot of thought into its development.

Data Collection

Dr. Francisco Brizuela at MDC handles college-level data collection related to program evaluation, while at the high school it is the responsibility of Ms. Sims-Jones. Dr. Brizuela is also responsible for the overall data collection system for the CCTI project.

The organization and many of the details of this system are still being worked out in consultation with the Chauncey Group. The administration of both the CSSSE survey and the HSSSE survey is planned for 2004 and 2006.

Benefits of the CCTI Program

The CCTI project at MDC has been carefully thought out and has the potential to make a very significant contribution, both to the students who participate in it and to the development of new ways for the college to meet the needs of the community. Participating students will be given the opportunity to progress rapidly through a challenging program leading to high quality, high wage career options. They will be able to bypass a number of potential roadblocks to their progress by following the streamlined pathway established through this program. The college, and the larger community, will benefit by piloting an approach with promise for expansion into many other career areas.

The learning community approach that they envision has great potential to improve the pathway into postsecondary education for students who have been traditionally underrepresented in college. This will be especially important because of the challenging nature of this rigorous program, and will be worth watching as a possible practice worthy of replicating elsewhere.

Challenges Associated with the Program

Those involved in the program are also thinking hard about how to resolve a number of challenges that were described by interviewees during the site visit. Early experiences with student recruitment indicate that a large number of those interested will have difficulty in meeting the criteria for acceptance into the program. On the other hand, only highly qualified individuals are likely to be successful in these demanding courses and work-based learning experiences. Current plans are to test potential candidates early on their academic skills, offer them remediation for areas of weakness, and then re-test them. However, work remains to determine how to effectively help them prepare for retesting, although the SAIL lab will clearly be an important resource in this process.

Other challenges mentioned by those interviewed included:

- Helping students to actually make it into college, given their many challenges and fairly low matriculation rates to date.
- Developing a workable data collection system.
- Providing training and internships for high school students in the hospital setting; most previous experience in the hospital has been with older students.
- Helping students to connect with the small learning community concept.

The Future

Those involved with the project are clearly dedicated, capable, and energetic people. Further, they have allowed themselves time to undertake careful planning activities and

establish strong communication among the project partners before beginning to serve students. There is every reason to believe that the MDC health occupations CCTI program will be a great success.



SITE PARTNERSHIP MEMBER LIST

Site Partnership:

Miami Dade College

	NAME	TITLE	INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION	email address	PHONE NUMBER
1	Dr. Eduardo Padron	District President	Miami Dade College District Administration	epadron@mdc.edu	305-237-3316
2	Dr. Juan Abascal	Associate Provost for Academics	Miami Dade College District Administration	jabascal@mdc.edu	305-237-3037
3	Dr. Frances Aronovitz	Director, School of Nursing	Miami Dade College District Administration	faronovi@mdc.edu	305-237-4039
4	Dr. Carol Miller	Director, School of Allied Health Technologies	Miami Dade College District Administration	cmiller1@mcd.edu	305-237-4031
5	Ms. Diane Sue Girogi	Student Recruitment	Miami Dade College Kendall Campus	dgiorgi@mdc.edu	305-237-0742
6	Dr. Jorge Obseso	Chairperson, Biology, Health and Wellness	Miami-Dade College, Kendall Campus	jobeso@mdc.edu	305-237-0652
7	Ms. Melitta Auclair	Corporate Director of Education	Baptist Health South Florida	melittaa@baptisthealth.net	305-662-8139
8	Mr. Lee Huntley	Chief Executive Officer	Baptist Hospital of Miami	leeh@baptisthealth.net	305-596-6503
9	Mr. D. Wayne Brackin	Chief Executive Officer	South Miami Hospital	wayneb@baptisthealth.net	305-662-8100
10	Ms. Caryl Grant	Assistant Principal of Curriculum	Felix Varela High School	crgrant@varela.dadeschools.net	305-995-7900 x 1006
11	Ms. Justine Whitaker	Instructional Supervisor, Health Science Education	Miami-Dad County Public Schools	jwhitaker@dadeschools.net	305-995-1832

12	Dr. Castell Bryant	President, Medical Center Campus	Miami-Dade College Medical Center	cbryant@mdc.edu	305-237-4025
13	Ms. Bernice L. Bethel	Career Specialist	Felix Varela High School	bbethel@varela.dadeschools.net	305-752-7900 x 1024



Appendix B: CCTI IMPROVEMENT PLAN

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE

Site Partnership

Outcome #1	Strategy	Action Steps	Target Date	Who is Responsible	Exception		Corrective Action	
					Yes	No	Yes	No

<p>Reducing the need for remediation of students entering post secondary education.</p> <p>90% of the students will not need remediation and/or will pass the CPT</p>	1.Student early assessment	1.Students take Post-secondary Articulation Software Service (PASS-practice test) in 10 th /11 th grade to determine readiness for College Placement Test (CPT)	June, 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes/HS/Marilyn Sims-Jones		
		1a. Involve career counseling in HS	June, 2004			
	2.Students pass the CPT before graduating HS	2.Involve America Reads	July, 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes/HS/Marilyn Sims-Jones		
		2a. High School (HS)/Miami Dade College (MDC) Labs for Students providing tutorials	Ongoing			
		2b. Internet Base Technology at Student Assisted Individualized Learning -lab (SAIL-lab)	Ongoing-already in place			



CCTI IMPROVEMENT PLAN

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE

Site Partnership

Outcome #2	Strategy	Action Steps	Target Date	Who is Responsible	Exception		Corrective Action	
					Yes	No	Yes	No

<p>Increasing enrollment and persistence in postsecondary education.</p> <p>90% of the students will remain in the program</p>	1. Providing focused professional development	1. Scheduling workshops/seminars: Test-taking strategies, teaching strategies for community college students, test construction	Ongoing-August 2004	Reyes/College Training and Development (CT & D)			
	2. Engage Students	2. Participate in health care activities	August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes			
	3. Financial Assistance	2a. Student mentors	August 2004				
		3. Dual enrollment in the 12 th grade	August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes			
	3a. Stipend for work experience	August 2004					
4. Enroll students in nursing program	4. Review selection criteria to allow admission of students just completing HS	August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes				



CCTI IMPROVEMENT PLAN

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE

Site Partnership

Outcome #3	Strategy	Action Steps	Target Date	Who is Responsible	Exception		Corrective Action	
					Yes	No	Yes	No
<p>Improving academic and skill achievement at secondary and postsecondary levels.</p> <p>90% of the students will improve academically /achieve skills</p>	<p>Focusing on at risk students early at the secondary level by providing contextual opportunities for learning rigorous academic content</p>	<p>1. Identify students with skills deficiency through PASS</p> <p>1a. Student tutoring appropriate to the individual needs of the students</p>	<p>August 2004</p>	<p>MDC/Miriam Reyes/HS/Marilyn Sims-Jones</p>				



CCTI IMPROVEMENT PLAN

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE

Site Partnership

Outcome #4	Strategy	Action Steps	Target Date	Who is Responsible	Exception		Corrective Action	
					Yes	No	Yes	No
Increasing the number of postsecondary degrees, certificate and licensures 90% of retention rate will assure continuity within this program with the ultimate goal of obtaining degree May 2006	1. Engage students	1. Participate in health care activities 1a. Student mentors	August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes				
	2. Providing focused professional development	2. Scheduling workshops/seminars: Test-taking skills, teaching strategies for community college students, test construction	Ongoing-August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes/CT&D				
	3. Financial Assistance	3. Dual enrollment in the 12 th grade 3a. Stipend for work experience	August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes				
	4. Enroll students in the nursing program	4. Review selection criteria to allow admission of students just completing HS	August 2004 NOTE: 1st group will graduate from nursing program May 2006	MDC/Miriam Reyes				

CCTI IMPROVEMENT PLAN

MIAMI-DADE COLLEGE

Site Partnership

Outcome #5	Strategy	Action Steps	Target Date	Who is Responsible	Exception		Corrective Action	
					Yes	No	Yes	No
Improving entry into employment and/or further education. 90% of the participants will acquire suitable employment by the end of this project	1. Aligning graduation requirements to entry requirements at postsecondary and to industry standards 2. Engage students	1. Dual enrollment in the 12 th grade	August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes				
		2. Partnership site-based experience	August 2004	MDC/Miriam Reyes/Melitta Auclair				
		2a. Participate in health care activities	August 2004					