

English Learner Course Taking Pattern

Brian Stern, M.S.W., Research Analyst
brianstern@calpass.org

Based on a request from an English Learner (EL) Council, we analyzed the course-taking pattern of ELD students for the academic years available. There are four academic years available for study, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2004-05. There were a total of 75,608 courses taken and successfully completed by 8,282 students for this time period. Relevant demographic factors are contained in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics of ELD Students

<i>Grade Level</i>		<i>Home Language</i>		<i>Ethnicity</i>		<i>English Prof</i>	
6 th	10.9%	Spanish	75.2%	Hispanic	91.2%	E Learner	95.4%
7 th	13.7%	Other	23.9%	Asian	3.9%	R-FEP	2.0%
8 th	10.6%	Korean	0.9%	White	2.9%	English	2.3%
9 th	25.4%			Filipino	0.9%	I-FEP	0.2%
10 th	19.1%			Other	0.5%		
11 th	14.0%						
12 th	6.2%						

Additionally, 52.8% of these students are male and 47.2% female.

Table 2. Percentage of Total ELD Courses by Grade Level

	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
ELD	10.50%	13.94%	5.51%	3.84%	0.52%		
ELD I	7.11%	5.48%	5.46%	18.35%	15.51%	9.89%	4.90%
ELD II	7.39%	4.95%	5.42%	17.49%	20.53%	17.95%	10.68%
ELD III	14.99%	11.11%	18.91%	16.34%	19.76%	23.89%	30.15%
ELD IV	45.99%	30.82%	39.59%	32.88%	30.35%	32.49%	35.18%
ESL	0.97%	0.14%	0.26%				
ESL I	1.93%	5.77%	3.90%	3.49%	3.88%	2.86%	0.63%
ESL II	1.66%	4.76%	4.29%	1.40%	3.14%	3.14%	2.64%
ESL III		3.99%	3.38%	1.89%	2.22%	5.24%	7.04%
Other	9.46%	19.04%	13.27%	4.32%	4.10%	4.54%	8.79%
Total N	1448	2080	2306	3494	2708	1850	796

The course-taking pattern is fairly consistent over the different grade levels. About sixty percent of students take ELD III or IV. There is a higher percentage of students in ELD I and II in the first three years of high school, while more students are enrolled in Other ELD courses in the middle school grades. Less than half as many students take ELD courses in their senior year. (Table 2).

Table 3. Course progression

		Subsequent ELD course taken					Total
		ELD	ELD I	ELD II	ELD III	ELD IV	
First ELD course taken	ELD	43	0	7	31	10	91
	ELD I	0	42	237	68	9	356
	ELD II	0	2	39	212	46	299
	ELD III	14	6	12	149	261	442
	ELD IV	61			6	606	673
	Total	118	50	295	466	932	1861

Three quarters of students successfully completed one ELD course during the time period of interest. Twenty percent successfully completed two courses, and almost 6% completed three or more courses. Table 3 shows the course progression for the 1,861 students who successfully completed ELD courses in two consecutive years. Less than 2% of students take a lower course in their second year. A large number of students (44.7%) take the next course in sequence, while the remainder repeat the same course. There are also a small number of students who successfully completed ESL rather ELD courses. The course progression for these students is very similar to Table 3.

Table 4. Course Taking Pattern-3 consecutive academic years

1 st course	2 nd course	3 rd course	Percentage
ELD IV	ELD IV	ELD IV	25.89%
ELD III	ELD IV	ELD IV	15.00%
ELD I	ELD II	ELD III	12.50%
ELD II	ELD III	ELD IV	9.46%
ELD III	ELD	ELD IV	6.07%

For those students who successfully completed three ELD courses in consecutive academic years, the most frequent patterns are shown in Table 4. About 30% of students complete the same course for three consecutive years, including those students who completed the highest level ELD course for three consecutive years.