University System of Georgia
Learning Support/Core Curriculum Feedback Summary
Grade Performance in Selected Core Courses, FY2005

Introduction

The purpose of Learning Support (LS) in the University System of Georgia (USG) is to prepare students for success in college-level courses. One way to examine the success of LS students and to evaluate LS program effectiveness is to compare the grades in specific Core Curriculum courses of students who completed LS with the grades of students who did not require LS.

This summary describes performance in English 1101 (English Composition I), Math 1101 (Introduction to Mathematical Modeling), and Math 1111 (College Algebra) for undergraduates who entered a System institution with no transfer history in FY2005. It compares the performance of students with LS requirements at the System level (equivalent placement criteria across all USG institutions), LS requirements at the institutional level (higher standards that may differ across institutions), and no LS requirements. The results are based on grade distributions for 44,324 students in English 1101, 11,110 students in Math 1101, and 26,330 students in Math 1111 who took the courses in FY2005.

At research, regional, and state universities, the numbers of students with LS requirements have decreased significantly since 1997, when the admissions requirements were changed. Table 1 shows the numbers and percentages of students taking English 1101, Math 1101, and Math 1111 in FY2005 who entered (as non-transfer students) with LS requirements in English or mathematics at the System or institutional level. (Note that this table does not indicate the total number and percentage of entering students with LS requirements. That information is included in the Learning Support section of the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis website at http://www.usg.edu/sra/students/ls/ls-reqs/.) Systemwide, 89.3 percent of the students taking English 1101 had no LS requirements in English. Of those taking one of the core mathematics courses, 77.4 percent had no LS mathematics requirements (80.7 percent for Math 1101 and 76.0 percent for Math 1111). At the research and regional universities, the numbers and percentages of students with LS requirements were very small, while substantial numbers of students taking Core Curriculum courses at the state and two-year colleges entered with LS requirements. (In this summary, results for state colleges and two-year colleges are combined. There have been many changes in the classification of two-year colleges recently, and combining the categories will facilitate comparisons over time. Combining the categories for the purpose of this report seems reasonable because two-year and state colleges have the same admissions and Learning Support placement requirements.)

Table 2 shows the grade distributions in English 1101, Math 1101, and Math 1111 by Learning Support status. Only grades for students with no transfer history are included, and grades of "I" and "Other" are excluded. Detailed reports by sector are available on the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis Website: http://www.usg.edu/sra/students/ls/ls-feedback/.

Table 1

Number and Percentage of Students with
System or Institutional LS Requirements by Subject and Sector*
FY2005

	English				Math			
	System		Institutional		System		Institutional	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Research Univ.	8	.1	13	.2	24	.8	33	1.0
Regional Univ.	46	.9	24	.5	100	2.1	25	.5
State Univ.	581	4.1	304	2.1	1,265	10.1	525	4.2
State/Two-Year Coll.	3,283	17.6	505	2.7	5,728	33.8	769	4.5
System	3,918	8.8	846	1.9	7,117	19.0	1,352	3.6

*Includes only those students taking English 1101, Math 1101, or Math 111 in FY2005; does not include transfer students.

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Students by
Grade Earned in Core Courses and Learning Support Status
FY2005

ENGLISH 1101

English Requirement		GRADE -- A --	-- B --	-- C --	-- D --	-- F --	-- W --	-- WF --
No LS English Req.	#	8,965	14,302	7,531	1,886	3,175	3,124	421
	%	22.8	36.3	19.1	4.8	8.1	7.9	1.1
LS-System Req.	#	339	1,073	1,174	368	412	492	53
	%	8.7	27.4	30.0	9.4	10.5	12.6	1.4
LS-Inst. Req.	#	107	264	195	62	91	112	15
	%	12.6	31.2	23.0	7.3	10.8	13.2	1.8

MATH 1101

Math Requirement		GRADE -- A --	-- B --	-- C --	-- D --	-- F --	-- W --	-- WF --
No LS Math Req.	#	2,119	2,255	1,711	747	921	1,098	86
	%	23.7	25.2	19.1	8.4	10.3	12.3	1.0
LS-System Req.	#	198	353	352	147	238	346	14
	%	12.0	21.4	21.4	8.9	14.4	21.0	0.8
LS-Inst. Req.	#	90	96	108	40	68	83	10
	%	18.2	19.4	21.8	8.1	13.7	16.8	2.0

MATH 1111

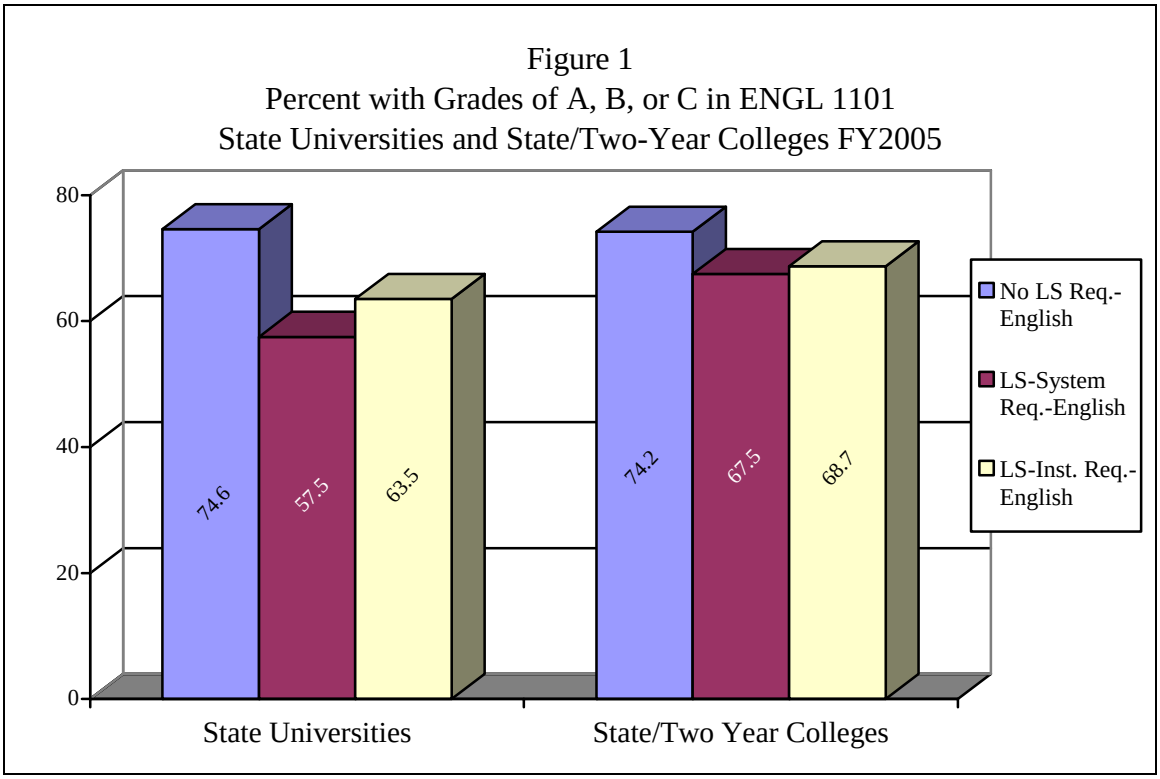
Math Requirement		GRADE -- A --	-- B --	-- C --	-- D --	-- F --	-- W --	-- WF –
No LS Math Req.	#	3,250	4,165	4,098	1,998	2,824	3,359	264
	%	16.3	20.9	20.5	10.0	14.1	16.8	1.3
LS-System Req.	#	464	870	1,132	655	974	1,283	75
	%	8.5	16.0	20.8	12.0	17.9	23.5	1.4
LS-Inst. Req.	#	80	136	177	96	154	196	18
	%	9.3	15.9	20.7	11.2	18.0	22.9	2.1

English 1101: English Composition I

Of those students who had LS-System requirements in English, 66.1 percent received an “A,” “B,” or “C” (hereafter called a "success rate") in English 1101, compared with 78.2 percent of students who did not have an English LS requirement and 66.8 percent with an institutional LS requirement. There was a 12.1 percentage point gap between the success rates of students with no LS requirements and students with System-level requirements, higher than the 11.2 percentage point gap in FY2003 but lower than the 13.4 percentage point gap in 2004.

Performance for the state university and state/two-year college sectors is shown in Figure 1. Results for research and regional universities are not shown because the numbers of students with LS requirements were small. For research universities, the success rate was 92.1 percent for the 6,342 students with no LS requirements in English and 66.7 percent for the 21 students with System or institutional LS requirements. For regional universities, the success rate was 81.6 percent for the 4,958 students with no LS requirement in English, 73.9 percent for the 46 students with System requirements, and 70.8 percent for the 24 students with institutional requirements.

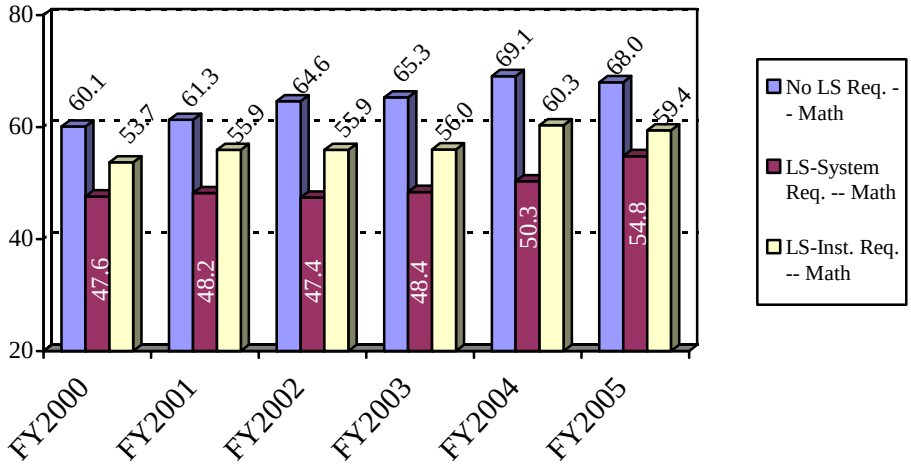
Figure 1
Percent with Grades of A, B, or C in ENGL 1101
State Universities and State/Two-Year Colleges FY2005



Math 1101: Introduction to Mathematical Modeling

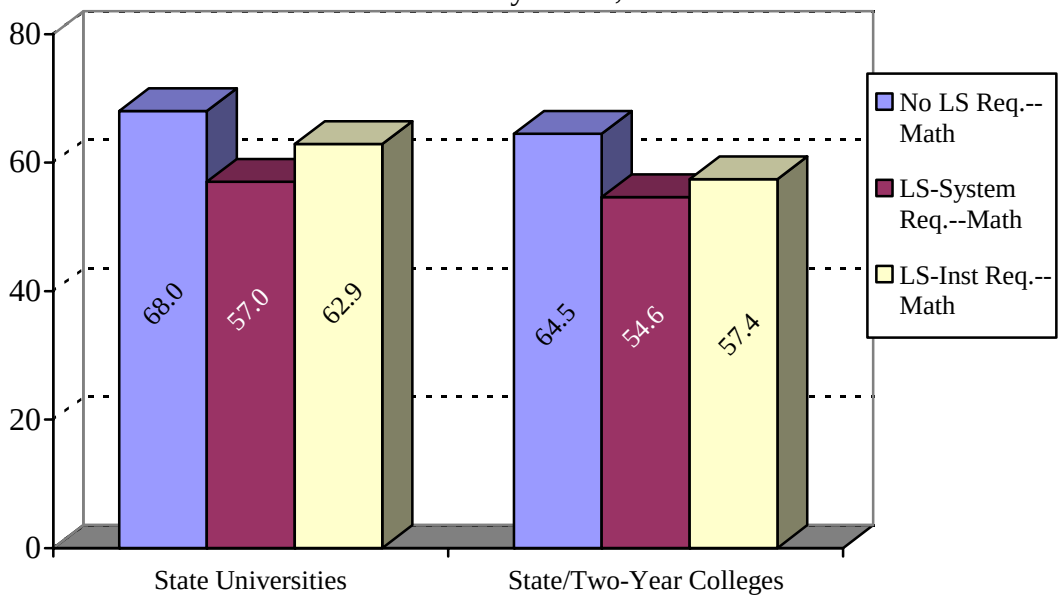
The success rates in Math 1101 of students with no LS math requirement, System LS math requirements, and institutional math requirements from FY2000 to FY2005 are shown in Figure 2. The success rate of students with System-required LS showed a substantial increase from FY2002, when the criteria for LS placement in mathematics were increased, to FY2005. The gap between the success rates of students with System-required LS and those with no LS requirements decreased from 17.2 percentage points in FY2002 to 13.2 percentage points in FY2005.

Figure 2
Percent with Grades of A, B, or C in Math 1101
All USG Institutions, FY2000 - FY 2005



Performance by sector is shown in Figure 3. Results for research and regional universities are not shown because the numbers of students with LS requirements were small. For research universities, the success rate was 74.3 percent for the 2,101 students with no LS requirement in mathematics, 35.3 percent for the 17 students with System requirements, and 50.0 percent for the 30 students with institutional requirements. For regional universities, the success rate was 58.6 percent for the 451 students with no LS requirement in mathematics. Only 8 students at regional universities had LS requirements at the System or institutional level.

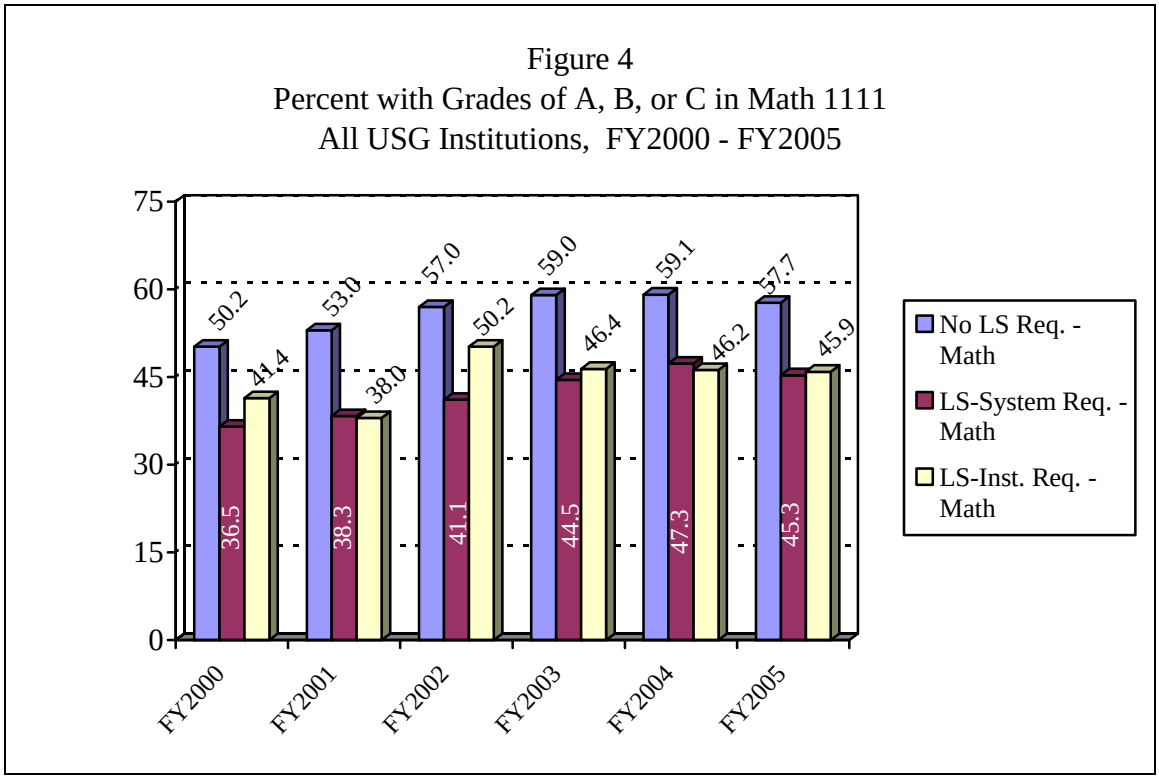
Figure 3
Percent with Grades of A, B, or C in Math 1101
USG Institutions by Sector, FY 2005



Math 1111: College Algebra

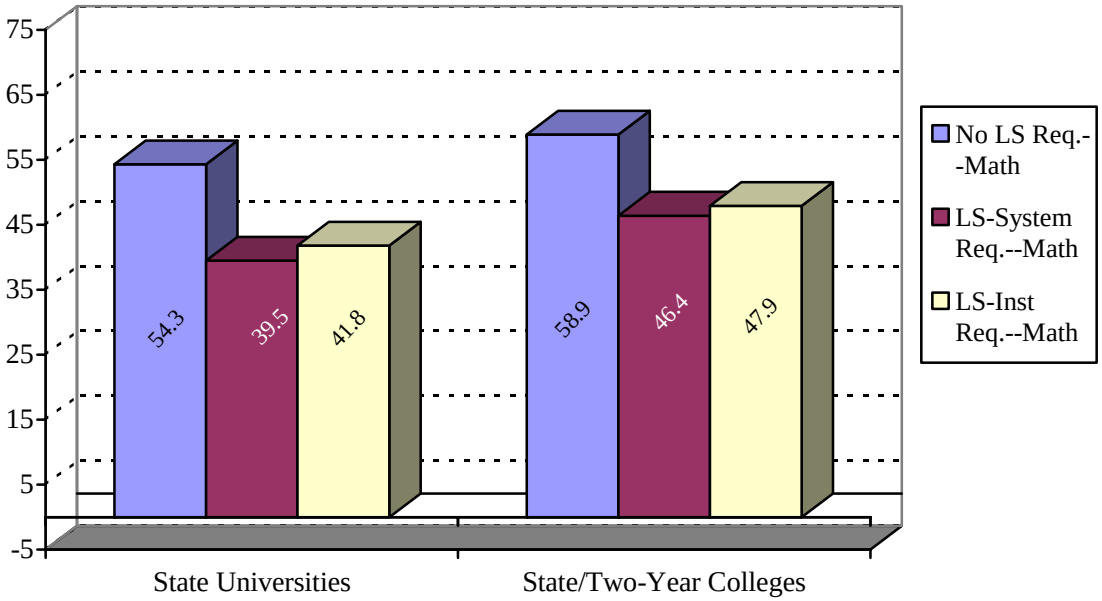
Figure 4 shows the success rates of students taking Math 1111 by LS status from FY2000 through FY2005. The success rate of students taking Math 1111 improved substantially from FY2000 to FY2004 but decreased slightly in FY2005.

Figure 4
Percent with Grades of A, B, or C in Math 1111
All USG Institutions, FY2000 - FY2005



Performance by sector is shown in Figure 5. Results for research and regional universities are not shown on the chart because the numbers of students with LS requirements were small. For research universities, the success rate was 75.7 percent for the 1,016 students with no LS requirements. Results are not reported for the 7 students with System LS requirements and 3 students with institutional LS requirements. For regional universities, the success rate was 56.5 percent for the 4,179 students with no LS requirements in mathematics, 46.3 percent for the 93 students with System requirements, and 56.5 percent for the 23 students with institutional requirements.

Figure 5
Percent with Grades of A, B, or C in Math 1111
USG Institutions by Sector, FY 2005



Interpreting Gaps

For each Core Curriculum course examined, students with LS requirements were less likely to receive passing grades than students with no LS requirements. The lower passing rates for LS students are expected given that these students entered college with less preparation and were identified as not having the skills necessary for success. That many of the LS students were able to pass Core Curriculum courses despite their lack of preparation can be a sign of the effectiveness of LS, although it is likely that some of these students would have succeeded without LS. In evaluating the effectiveness of LS programs, each institution must determine how narrow the gap in performance should be between those students with LS requirements and those with no LS requirements for LS to have effectively served its purpose. In addition, institutions with low success rates in Core Curriculum courses for those students without LS requirements might consider strengthening institutional LS placement and exit requirements to ensure that students are getting the support they need.

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