



Student Migration from ESL
Noncredit to ESL/English
Credit Courses:
A 4-Year Baseline Comparison
of Prior Noncredit ESL
Students

2004/05 – 2007/08

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to provide baseline data and information on student enrollment patterns and student outcomes for noncredit ESL students who migrated into credit ESL or English courses. This information may be used to develop strategies for recruiting, matriculating and retaining noncredit ESL students into college credit courses. Three groups of students were examined in this report¹:

- 1) *Prior Noncredit ESL Students in Credit ESL/English Courses* – This group included students who first enrolled in a Continuing Education noncredit ESL course and later enrolled in a City/ECC, Mesa, or Miramar credit ESL or English course. These students were the primary focus of this study. Where appropriate they were compared to two additional groups of students.
- 2) *Credit-Only ESL/English Student Population* – This group of students included students in college credit ESL/English courses who had not migrated from noncredit ESL courses.
- 3) *General College Population* – This group included all students enrolled in any credit college course.

To provide the groundwork for future studies, a Fall 2007 baseline student profile of *prior noncredit ESL students enrolled in credit ESL/English courses* was examined and compared to the *credit-only ESL/English student population* and the *general college population*. Baseline noncredit and credit enrollment of specific clusters of students were also tracked from 2004/05 to 2007/08.

Furthermore, the enrollment patterns of *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* were examined in greater depth. Student cohorts were tracked across multiple years, and ESL/English course enrollment was measured by course level. Enrollment by students in ESL/English course levels was then measured pre- and post-migration, as well as at significant milestones during a student's education (i.e., a student's first ESL/English course taken in noncredit/credit and a student's last ESL/English course taken in noncredit/credit). The top 5 noncredit and credit ESL/English courses were also compared pre- and post-migration.

Finally, student outcomes of all three comparison groups were examined². Successful course completion and retention rates were analyzed by college and by ESL/English course level.

¹ Tutoring courses were excluded from all analyses. Noncredit English courses were excluded from all analyses due to the small number of noncredit English courses offered. Students who were concurrently enrolled in both noncredit and credit ESL/English courses in their first college credit course were excluded from the *prior noncredit ESL student group* and the *credit-only ESL/English population*.

² Student outcomes for the general college population may not match the 2008 Prior Noncredit Report. In this report college affiliation was determined by the college offering the course rather than the student's campus of record.

STUDENT PROFILE

A student profile of each comparison group is detailed in this section, including gender, ethnicity and age. The profile is based on an unduplicated headcount of students enrolled in the Fall 2007 term.

Females were overrepresented and males underrepresented in the *prior noncredit ESL student group* (63% female and 37% male) compared to the *credit-only ESL/English student population* (53% female and 47% male) and the *general college student population* (52% female and 48% male; See Table 1).

Asian/Pacific Islander students (44% compared to 17%) and those students who reported their ethnicity as “Other” (8% compared to 3%) were overrepresented in the *prior noncredit ESL student group* when compared to the *credit-only ESL/English population*, while Filipino (0% compared to 7%), Latino (21% compared to 28%), and White students (18% compared to 29%) were underrepresented in the *prior noncredit ESL student group* when compared to the *credit-only ESL/English population*.

Asian/Pacific Islander students (44% compared to 13%) and those students who reported their ethnicity as “Other” (8% compared to 3%) were overrepresented in the *prior noncredit ESL student group* when compared to the *general college population*, while Filipino students (0% compared to 6%) and White students (18% compared to 38%) were underrepresented in the *prior noncredit ESL student group* when compared to the *general college population*. African American and American Indian students were represented relatively proportionately across all comparison groups.

The mean age of *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* was higher than both the *credit-only ESL/English student population* and the *general college population* (32, 23, and 27 respectively).

Table 1. Profile of students in Fall 07 college credit courses

		Prior Noncredit ESL Students in Credit ESL/English Courses		Credit-Only ESL/English Student Population		General College Population	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Gender	Male	130	37%	4,949	47%	22,534	48%
	Female	222	63%	5,630	53%	24,143	52%
	Unknown	0	0%	2	<1%	9	<1%
Ethnicity	African American	31	9%	916	9%	3,843	8%
	American Indian	0	0%	75	1%	421	1%
	Asian/Pac Islander	156	44%	1,763	17%	5,915	13%
	Filipino	0	0%	736	7%	2,816	6%
	Latino	72	21%	2,992	28%	10,543	23%
	White	62	18%	3,038	29%	17,493	38%
	Other	28	8%	363	3%	1,488	3%
	Unknown	3	1%	698	7%	4,167	9%
Mean Age		32		23		27	

Source: SDCCD Information System

ENROLLMENT

Between 2004/05 and 2007/08, student enrollment (duplicated count of students) in ESL noncredit courses decreased by less than 1%, while student enrollment in ESL credit courses increased by 3% and student enrollment in English credit courses increased by 4%. (See Figures 1 to 3.)

Figure 1. Students enrolled in ESL noncredit courses

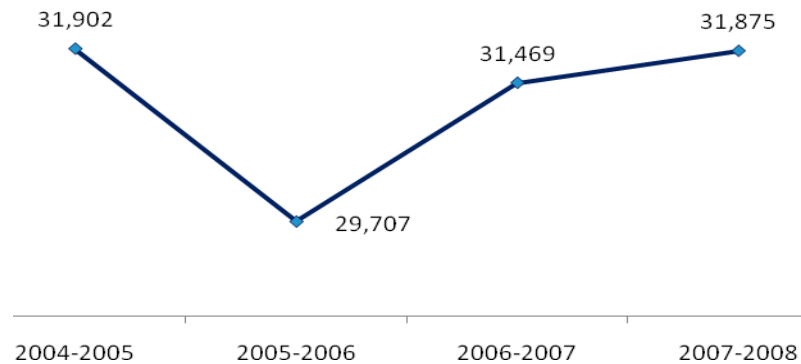


Figure 2. Students enrolled in ESL credit courses

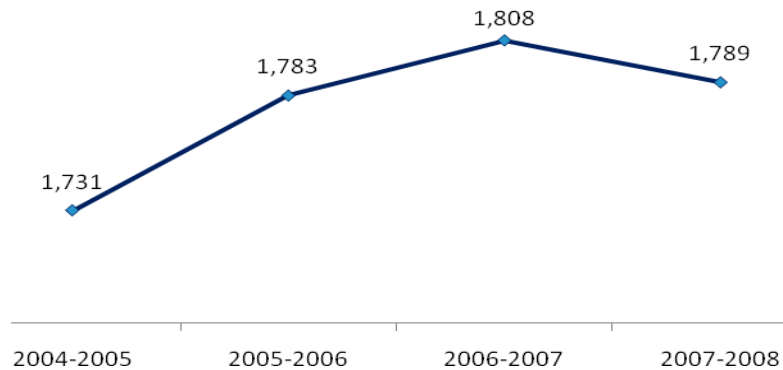
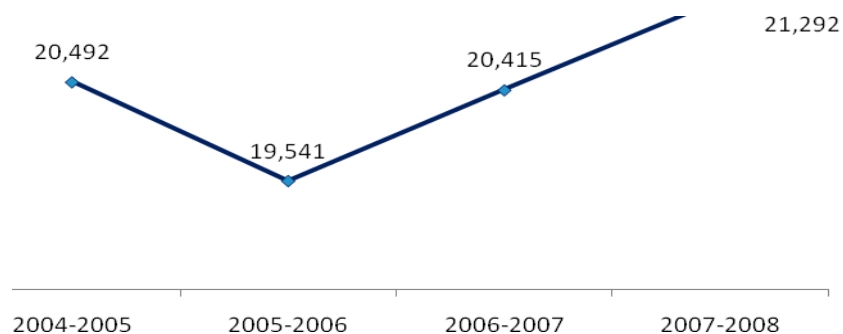


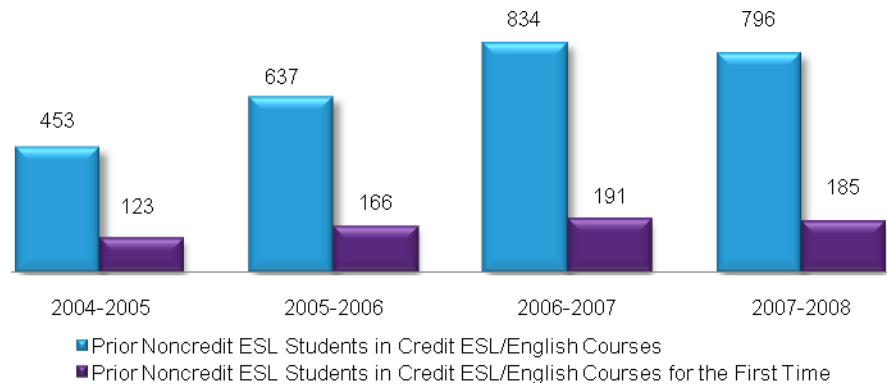
Figure 3. Students enrolled in English credit courses



HEADCOUNT

While the headcount³ of the primary group of focus in this report, the *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses*, increased from 2004/05 to 2007/08 by 76% (453 in 2004/05 to 796 in 2007/08; See Figure 4.), the headcount of these same students who were taking their first college credit ESL or English course post migration increased by 50% (123 in 2004/05 to 185 in 2007/08).

Figure 4. Headcounts of students enrolled in ESL/English credit courses



³ Headcount is the number of students enrolled as of census day (excludes students who dropped or never attended prior to census day). It is an **unduplicated count** of students by term but may be duplicated across terms. All analyses include only students enrolled as of census day.

ESL AND ENGLISH STUDENT ENROLLMENT PATTERNS PRE- AND POST-MIGRATION

The enrollment patterns of the primary group of focus in this report, the *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses*, were examined pre-migration (in noncredit coursework) and post-migration (in credit coursework).

Student Enrollment Patterns Pre-Migration

This section details the enrollment patterns of the primary group, *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses*, while still enrolled in noncredit ESL coursework. Enrollments by these same students were measured in their first term enrolled in noncredit ESL courses and their last term enrolled in noncredit ESL courses.

Between 2004/05 and 2007/08, the greatest number of noncredit ESL enrollments by *prior noncredit ESL students* were within courses in the Multi-Level course range (30%), followed by the Intermediate High range (20%), and the Advanced High range (18%). (See Table 2.)

From 2004/05 to 2007/08, Multilevel courses showed the only increase in course enrollment by *prior noncredit ESL students* (15% increase).

Table 2. Students in noncredit ESL courses prior to migration to credit courses by course level

Noncredit ESL Course Levels	Academic Year										
	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		Total #	Total %	% Change
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			
Basic Lit	0	0%	3	0%	1	0%	3	0%	7	0%	*
Beginning Low	73	5%	35	3%	34	3%	11	1%	153	3%	-85%
Beginning High	86	6%	81	6%	46	4%	49	5%	262	5%	-43%
Intermediate Low	213	14%	145	10%	106	9%	46	5%	510	10%	-78%
Intermediate High	263	17%	250	18%	292	24%	203	21%	1,008	20%	-23%
Advanced Low	281	18%	226	16%	181	15%	81	8%	769	15%	-71%
Advanced High	273	18%	265	19%	208	17%	165	17%	911	18%	-40%
Multilevel	363	23%	405	29%	348	29%	418	43%	1,534	30%	15%
Total	1,552	100%	1,410	100%	1,216	100%	976	100%	5,154	100%	-37%

Source: SDCCD Information System

* 2004-05 student count is zero; therefore, % Difference value is undefined as a fraction.

Student Migration from ESL Noncredit to ESL/English Credit Courses

Prior noncredit ESL students who later migrated to college credit ESL/English courses were also examined in their first term taking noncredit ESL courses and in their last term taking noncredit ESL courses⁴. The greatest changes in noncredit ESL enrollment patterns were in the Intermediate Low and Advanced Low course levels. (See Table 3.) Fifteen percent of the enrollments by *prior noncredit ESL students* in their first noncredit term were in the Intermediate Low course level. The percentage of enrollments in this course level fell to 11% in their last term (4% decrease). Advanced Low level course enrollment increased by 6% from first (14%) to last term (20%).

Table 3. Students in their first/last noncredit ESL course prior to migration to credit courses by course level

Noncredit ESL Course Levels	First/Last Noncredit ESL Course	Academic Year									
		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		Total #	Total %
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Basic Lit	First-Course Cohort	0	0%	3	1%	0	0%	3	3%	6	1%
	Last-Course Cohort	0	0%	2	1%	---	---	---	---	2	1%
Beginning Low	First-Course Cohort	31	10%	6	2%	6	4%	1	1%	44	5%
	Last-Course Cohort	6	3%	1	1%	---	---	---	---	7	2%
Beginning High	First-Course Cohort	26	8%	20	8%	4	3%	10	10%	60	7%
	Last-Course Cohort	16	7%	7	4%	---	---	---	---	23	6%
Intermediate Low	First-Course Cohort	63	19%	43	17%	12	8%	7	7%	125	15%
	Last-Course Cohort	32	14%	14	8%	---	---	---	---	46	11%
Intermediate High	First-Course Cohort	53	16%	32	13%	38	26%	21	21%	144	17%
	Last-Course Cohort	41	18%	37	21%	---	---	---	---	78	19%
Advanced Low	First-Course Cohort	43	13%	36	14%	23	16%	12	12%	114	14%
	Last-Course Cohort	48	21%	34	19%	---	---	---	---	82	20%
Advanced High	First-Course Cohort	45	14%	38	15%	22	15%	23	23%	128	16%
	Last-Course Cohort	42	19%	35	20%	---	---	---	---	77	19%
Multilevel	First-Course Cohort	67	20%	73	29%	43	29%	22	22%	205	25%
	Last-Course Cohort	39	17%	48	27%	---	---	---	---	87	22%
Total	First-Course Cohort	328	100%	251	100%	148	100%	99	100%	826	100%
	Last-Course Cohort	224	100%	178	100%	---	---	---	---	402	100%

Source: SDCCD Information System

Note: Students in their first course were measured between Summer 2004 and Spring 2008. Summer 2004 to Spring 2006 first-course student cohorts were tracked out to six possible terms to determine last course enrolled.

⁴ Students in their first term were measured between Summer 2004 and Spring 2008. Summer 2004 to Spring 2006 first-term student cohorts were tracked out to six possible terms to determine last term enrollment.

Table 4 provides the top 5 noncredit courses taken by the *prior noncredit ESL student group* in their first term taking a noncredit ESL course and in their last term taking a noncredit ESL course. *Prior noncredit ESL students* in their first term taking noncredit ESL courses chose ESLA 435 (Intermediate High) and ESLA 415 (Multilevel) most frequently (16% each). *Prior noncredit ESL students* in their last term prior to migration to college credit courses chose ESLA 436 (Advanced Low) most frequently (20%), followed by ESLA 437 (Advanced High; 18%).

Table 4. Top 5 ESL courses taken in student's first and last term of noncredit courses

Prior Noncredit ESL Students in <u>First</u> Noncredit Course			Prior Noncredit ESL Students in <u>Last</u> Noncredit Course		
Course	Course Level	%	Course	Course Level	%
ESLA 435	Intermediate High	16%	ESLA 436	Advanced Low	20%
ESLA 415	Multilevel	16%	ESLA 437	Advanced High	18%
ESLA 434	Intermediate Low	15%	ESLA 435	Intermediate High	17%
ESLA 437	Advanced High	15%	ESLA 415	Multilevel	13%
ESLA 436	Advanced Low	14%	ESLA 434	Intermediate Low	11%

Source: SDCCD Information System

Note: Students in their first course were measured between Summer 2004 and Spring 2008.

Summer 2004 to Spring 2006 first-course student cohorts were tracked out to six possible terms to determine last course enrolled.

Student Enrollment Patterns Post-Migration

This section details the enrollment patterns of the primary group, *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses*, **after** migration to college credit ESL/English courses. Enrollment by these same students were measured in their first term enrolled in credit ESL/English courses and their last term enrolled in credit ESL/English courses.

Course levels were divided by the colleges into four ESL levels and three English levels. (See Table 5.) Students in credit ESL courses took courses at levels 19, 20, 30 or 40, based on their assessment skill level. English course levels ranged from basic skills to Associate level to Transfer level.

Between 2004/05 and 2007/08, the greatest number of credit ESL/English enrollments by the primary group of focus, *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses*, were within ESL Level 20 (27%), followed by ESL Level 30 (24%), and English Associate Level (17%). From 2004/05 to 2007/08, English Transfer Level, English Associate Level and ESL Level 40 courses showed the greatest increase in course enrollment by *prior noncredit ESL students* (247%, 209% and 100% increase).

Student Migration from ESL Noncredit to ESL/English Credit Courses

Table 5. Prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses by course level

Credit ESL/English Course Levels	Academic Year										
	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		Total #	Total %	% Change
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			
ESL Level 19	81	13%	107	12%	114	10%	98	8%	400	10%	21%
ESL Level in 20's	202	31%	271	30%	318	27%	271	23%	1,062	27%	34%
ESL Level in 30's	159	25%	209	23%	323	27%	255	22%	946	24%	60%
ESL Level in 40's	48	7%	67	8%	99	8%	96	8%	310	8%	100%
Engl Basic Skills	40	6%	49	6%	43	4%	60	5%	192	5%	50%
Engl Associate Level	87	13%	124	14%	188	16%	269	23%	668	17%	209%
Engl Transfer Level	32	5%	69	8%	109	9%	111	10%	321	8%	247%
Total	649	100%	896	100%	1,194	100%	1,160	100%	3,899	100%	79%

Source: SDCCD Information System

Prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses were also examined in their first term taking a college credit ESL/English course, and in their last term taking a college credit ESL/English course. The greatest change in enrollment patterns occurred within the lowest and the highest course levels. (See Table 6.) ESL Level 19 encompassed 27% of the course enrollments by *prior noncredit ESL students* in their first term taking college credit courses. ESL Level 19 courses fell to just 11% of the enrollments by *prior noncredit ESL students* in their last term taking college credit courses (16% decrease). Enrollment in English Associate level courses increased by 7% from first term (8%) to last term (15%) and enrollment in transfer level courses increased by 9% from first term (3%) to last term (12%).

Table 6. Prior noncredit ESL students in their first/last credit ESL/English course by course level

Credit ESL/English Course Levels	First/Last Credit ESL Course	Academic Year									
		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		Total #	Total %
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
ESL Level 19	First-Course Cohort	49	27%	69	27%	82	28%	70	25%	270	27%
	Last-Course Cohort	15	13%	21	11%	---	---	---	---	36	11%
ESL Level in 20's	First-Course Cohort	52	29%	79	31%	79	27%	68	25%	278	28%
	Last-Course Cohort	29	25%	54	27%	---	---	---	---	83	26%
ESL Level in 30's	First-Course Cohort	37	21%	52	21%	67	23%	69	25%	225	23%
	Last-Course Cohort	27	23%	44	22%	---	---	---	---	71	22%
ESL Level in 40's	First-Course Cohort	11	6%	9	4%	13	5%	12	4%	45	5%
	Last-Course Cohort	10	9%	18	9%	---	---	---	---	28	9%
Engl Basic Skills	First-Course Cohort	9	5%	20	8%	19	7%	26	9%	74	7%
	Last-Course Cohort	4	3%	8	4%	---	---	---	---	12	4%
Engl Associate Level	First-Course Cohort	17	9%	14	6%	24	8%	25	9%	80	8%
	Last-Course Cohort	17	15%	31	16%	---	---	---	---	48	15%
Engl Transfer Level	First-Course Cohort	5	3%	9	4%	8	3%	6	2%	28	3%
	Last-Course Cohort	15	13%	24	12%	---	---	---	---	39	12%
Total	First-Course Cohort	180	100%	252	100%	292	100%	276	100%	1000	100%
	Last-Course Cohort	117	100%	200	100%	---	---	---	---	317	100%

Source: SDCCD Information System

Note: Students in their first course were measured between Summer 2004 and Spring 2008. Summer 2004 to Spring 2006 first-course student cohorts were tracked out to six possible terms to determine last course enrolled.

Table 7 provides the top 5 college credit ESL/English courses taken by the prior noncredit ESL student group in their first term taking a college credit ESL/English course and in their last term taking a college credit ESL/English course. Prior noncredit ESL students in their first term taking a college credit ESL/English course chose the lowest level course, ESOL 019, most frequently (27%). Prior noncredit ESL students in their last term taking a college credit ESL/English course chose ESOL 019 most frequently (11%), followed by ESOL 020 and ENGL 051 (10% each).

Table 7. Top 5 ESL/English courses taken in student's first and last term of credit courses

Prior Noncredit ESL Students in <u>First</u> Credit Course			Prior Noncredit ESL Students in <u>Last</u> Credit Course		
Course	Course Level	%	Course	Course Level	%
ESOL019	ESL Level 19	27%	ESOL019	ESL Level 19	11%
ESOL020	ESL Level in 20's	11%	ESOL020	ESL Level in 20's	10%
ESOL022	ESL Level in 20's	9%	ENGL051	Associate Level	10%
ESOL021	ESL Level in 20's	8%	ESOL021	ESL Level in 20's	9%
ESOL030	ESL Level in 30's	8%	ESOL030	ESL Level in 30's	9%

Source: SDCCD Information System

Note: Students in their first course were measured between Summer 2004 and Spring 2008.

Summer 2004 to Spring 2006 first-course student cohorts were tracked out to six possible terms to determine last course enrolled.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Student outcomes were examined among all three comparison groups: the *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses*, the *credit-only ESL/English student population* and the *general college population*.

Successful Course Completion Rate

Among all colleges, the Fall 2007 success rate⁵ for *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* was higher than the *credit-only ESL/English student population* and the *general college population* (72%, 65% and 64% respectively; See Table 8.).

Greater variation occurred across colleges among *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* (73%, City/ECC; 68%, Mesa; 75%, Miramar) and the *credit-only ESL/English student population* (61% at City/ECC, 68% at Mesa, and 65% at Miramar). The *general college population* showed less variation across colleges (63%, City/ECC; 63%, Mesa; 66%, Miramar).

Table 8. Student success in credit courses by college

College Offering Course	Prior Noncredit ESL Students in Credit ESL/English Courses	Credit-Only ESL/English Student Population	General College Population
	%	%	%
City College/ECC	73%	61%	63%
Mesa College	68%	68%	63%
Miramar College	75%	65%	66%
All Colleges	72%	65%	64%

Source: SDCCD Information System

Successful Course Completion Rate by ESL/English Course Level

Success rates among *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* were the highest in ESL Level 30 and Transfer Level courses (80% each) relative to all other ESL/English course levels. The *credit-only ESL/English student population* exhibited the highest success rate in ESL Level 19 courses (87%) compared to all other ESL/English course levels.

Table 9. Student success in ESL/English credit courses by course level

Credit ESL/English Course Levels	Prior Noncredit ESL Students in Credit ESL/English Courses	Credit-Only ESL/English Student Population
	%	%
ESL Level 19	65%	87%
ESL Level in 20's	72%	75%
ESL Level in 30's	80%	76%
ESL Level in 40's	75%	82%
Engl Basic Skills	70%	57%
Engl Associate Level	61%	62%
Engl Transfer Level	80%	66%

Source: SDCCD Information System

⁵ *Success Rate* is the percentage of census enrolled students who complete a course with a grade of A, B, C, or CR out of total census enrollments. (Tutoring courses and Public Safety courses are excluded).

Course Retention

Among all colleges, the Fall 2007 retention rate⁶ for *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* was higher than the *credit-only ESL/English student population* and the *general college population* (87%, 84% and 81% respectively; See Table 10.).

The *Prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* (87%, City/ECC; 87%, Mesa; 86%, Miramar) showed little variation in student retention across colleges. The *credit-only ESL/English student population* (86% at City/ECC, 84% at Mesa, and 82% at Miramar) and the *general college population* (81%, City/ECC; 80%, Mesa; 83%, Miramar) showed more variation in student retention across colleges.

Table 10. Student retention in credit courses by college

College Offering Course	Prior Noncredit ESL Students in Credit ESL/English Courses	Credit-Only ESL/English Student Population	General College Population
	%	%	%
City College/ECC	87%	86%	81%
Mesa College	87%	84%	80%
Miramar College	86%	82%	83%
All Colleges	87%	84%	81%

Source: SDCCD Information System

Course Retention by ESL/English Course Level

Retention rates among *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* were the highest in English Basic Skills level courses (93%) relative to all other ESL/English level courses. The *credit-only ESL/English student population* exhibited the highest retention in ESL Level 19 courses and ESL Level 40 courses (93% each) compared to all other ESL/English level courses.

Table 11. Student retention in ESL/English credit courses by course level

Credit ESL/English Course Levels	Prior Noncredit ESL Students in Credit ESL/English Courses	Credit-Only ESL/English Student Population
	%	%
ESL Level 19	89%	93%
ESL Level in 20's	86%	90%
ESL Level in 30's	87%	87%
ESL Level in 40's	87%	93%
Engl Basic Skills	93%	80%
Engl Associate Level	86%	89%
Engl Transfer Level	85%	80%

Source: SDCCD Information System

⁶ *Retention Rate* is the percentage of students who complete a course with a grade of A, B, C, D, F, CR, NC, I or RD out of total census enrollments (Note: Tutoring and Public Safety classes are included).

CONCLUSIONS

Several general conclusions can be made from this baseline report of ESL students who migrate to credit courses.

- There was a trend toward increased student enrollment in credit ESL and English courses, while student enrollment in noncredit ESL courses remained relatively stable.
- Students who migrated from noncredit ESL/English courses to credit ESL/English courses differed in their student profile from students taking only college credit ESL/English courses or the general college population, both of which had relatively similar student profiles.
- Overall, course enrollment by *prior noncredit ESL students* in noncredit courses declined from 04/05 to 07/08 and course enrollment by prior noncredit ESL students in credit courses increased from 04/05 to 07/08.
- *Prior noncredit ESL students* showed some progress and movement through both their noncredit course sequences and their credit course sequences. Enrollment in lower-level courses was greater in their first term taking a noncredit or credit course and lower in their last term taking a noncredit or credit course. The reverse was true among higher-level noncredit and credit course enrollments.
- Finally, *prior noncredit ESL students in credit ESL/English courses* showed greater course success and retention than the two comparison groups.