MUSTANG ACADEMIC BRIDGE PROGRAM

Annual Report 2011 -2012
Office of the Provost
Southern Methodist University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Overview 3
Student Overview 3
- **Gender** 3
- **Ethnicity** 4

Academic Progress: Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 4
- **Fall 2011** 4
- **Spring 2012** 10

Student Academic Performance 16
- **Fall Semester** 16
- **Spring Semester** 16
- **Academic Probation** 17
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress** 17
- **Major Declaration** 17

Workshops and Outings Overview 18
Mentor Program 18
Individual Appointments Overview 19
- **Fall 2011 Individual Appointments with Assistant Director for Student Success** 19
- **Fall 2011 Individual Appointments with Peer Counselor** 20
- **Spring 2012 Individual Appointments with Assistant Director for Student Success** 20
- **Spring 2012 Individual Appointments with Peer Counselor** 21

Study Groups 22
Communication with Faculty 22
Advisory Committee 22
Campus Partnerships 23
- **University Central Libraries** 23
- **Learning Enhancement Center** 23
- **Dedman College Advising Center** 23
- **Hegi Family Career Development Center** 23

Student Evaluation 24
Improvements in 2012-2013 Academic Year 24
- **Orientation** 24
- **Mentor Program** 24
- **Peer Counselors** 25
- **Student Coordinators** 25
- **Weekly Review Sessions** 25
- **Second-Year Program** 25

Conclusion 25

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In the fall of 2010, the Mustang Academic Bridge Program was launched. This is an initiative through the Office of the Provost to ensure first year students a successful transition from high school to college. The program is designed to provide students with an array of coordinated academic support and personal development services and to promote academic achievement and excellence. The menu of support services includes targeted academic advising, individual appointments, weekly study group sessions, peer counseling and mentoring, collaborative learning workshops, and special extra-curricular learning enhancement experiences. In the second year, we enhanced the program to include a two day orientation program prior to Mustang Corral, a Peer Counseling program, a Mentor program, and further developed the role of the Student Coordinator.

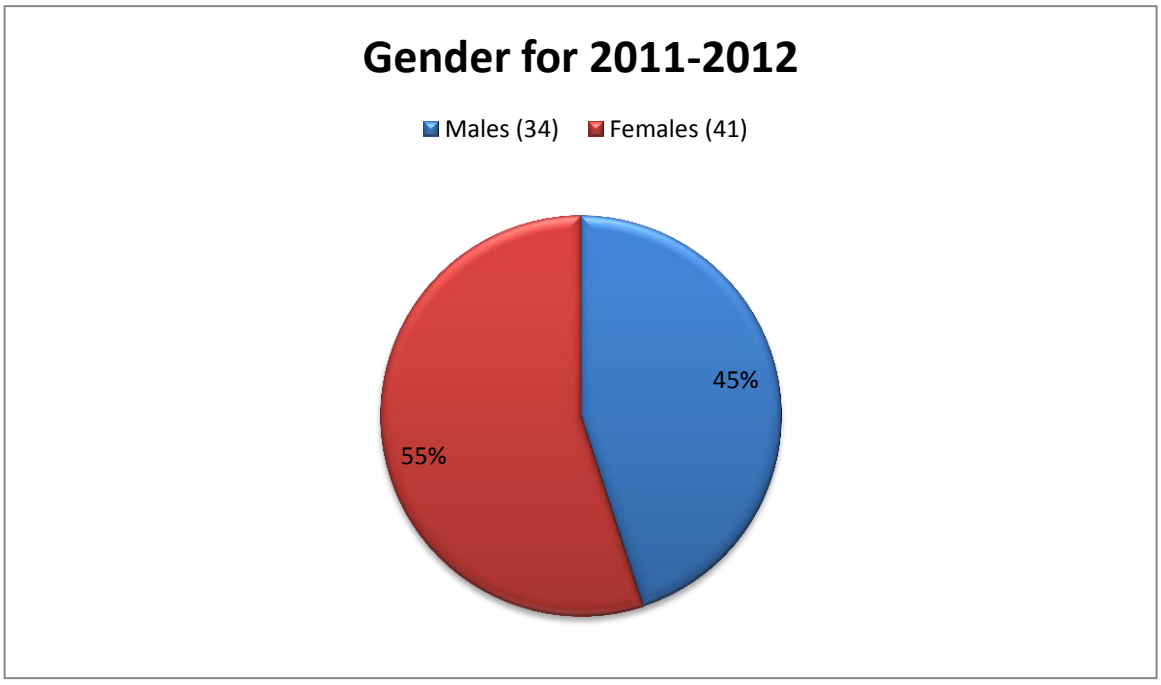
Based upon student feedback at the end of last year, we also improved the program by sending students information regarding potential classes and reserved course seating before they attended AARO. Additionally, students requested we provided more opportunity for students to get to know each other at the beginning of the academic year in order to develop a strong support system. Through the extended orientation program, students were allowed to interact and form relationships with students in their academic disciplines, who would potentially take many of the same courses as them over the course of the year.

STUDENT OVERVIEW

In April 2011, 491 admitted students were invited to the program. There were 75 matriculated students who formally accepted the invitation to participate. Out of the group, 69 of the students were active participants throughout the year.

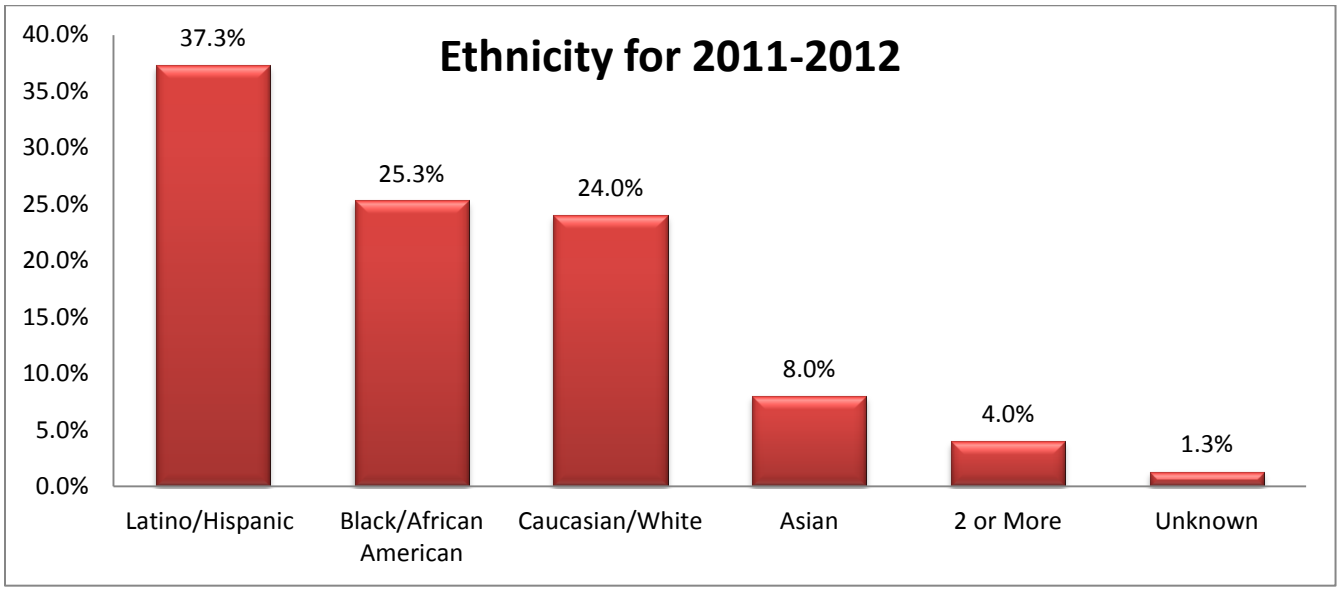
GENDER

Women outnumbered men in the Mustang Academic Bridge Program; 41 of the 75 students were female (55%), while 34 of the 75 students were male (45%).



ETHNICITY

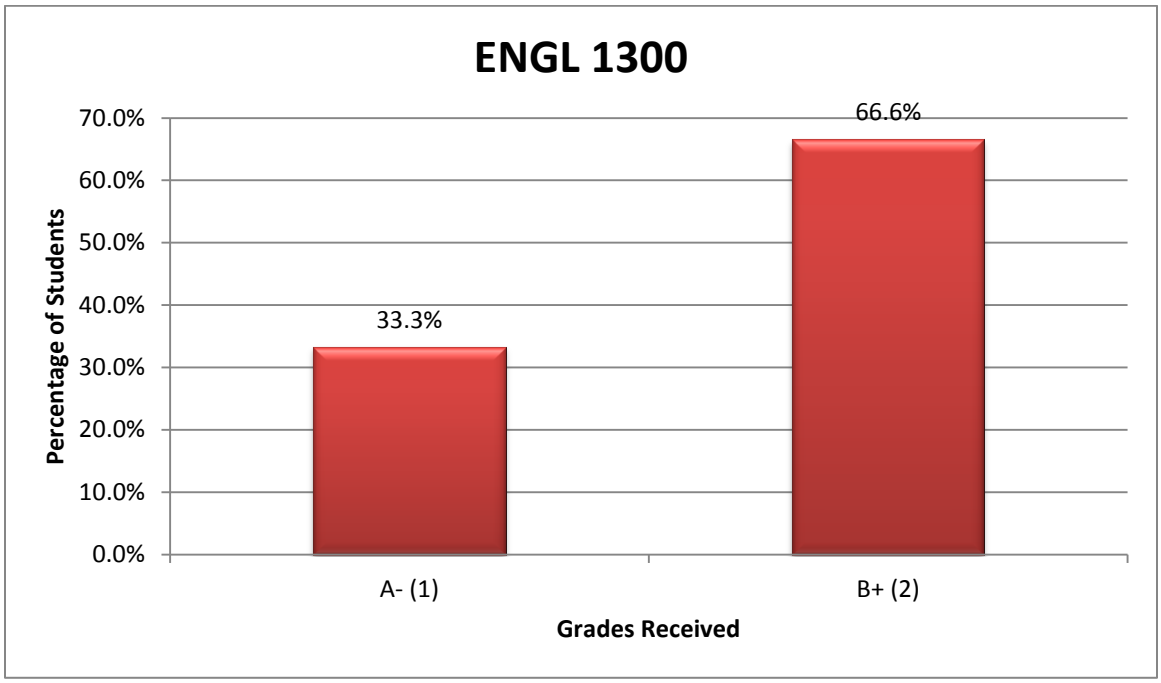
Of the 75 students, 37.3% (28) of the students were Hispanic, 25.3% (19) were Black, 24% (18) were Caucasian, 8% (6) were Asian, 4% (3) were 2 or More, and 1.3% (1) were of an unknown ethnicity.

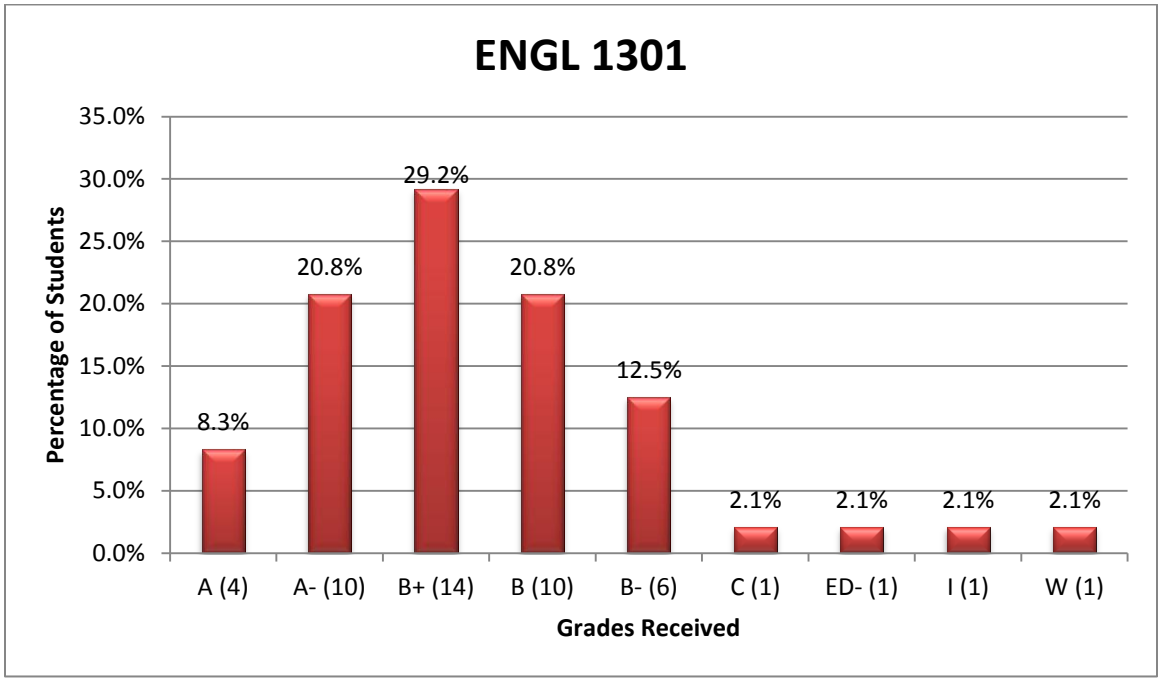


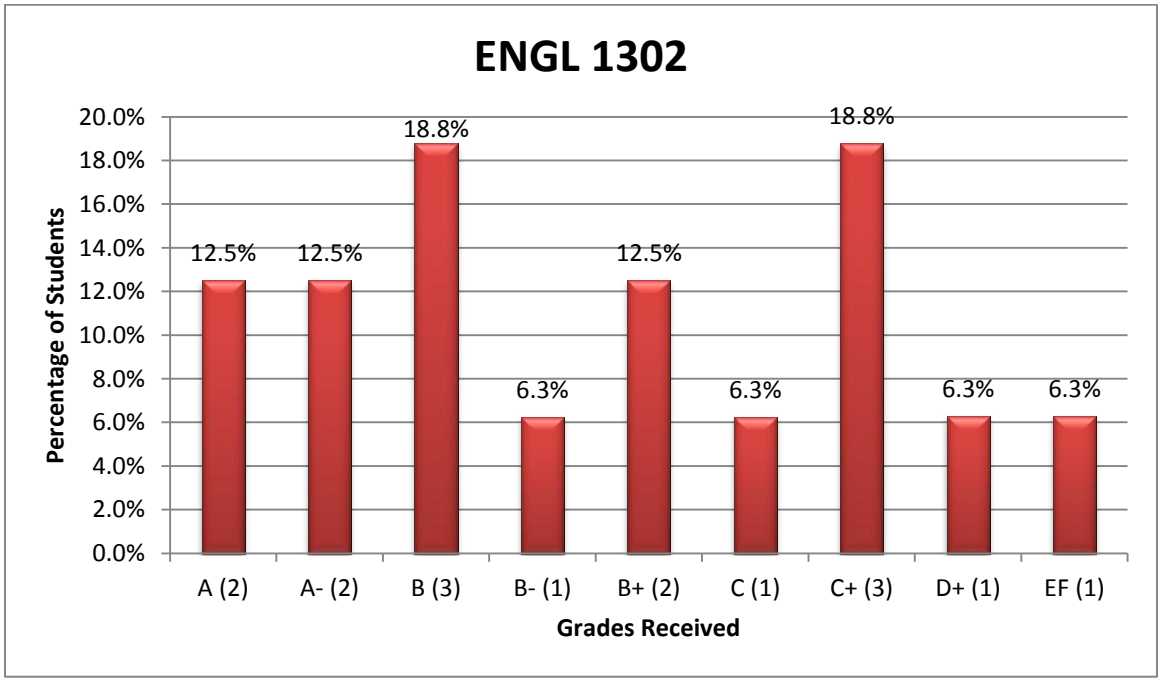
ACADEMIC PROGRESS: FALL 2011 AND SPRING 2012

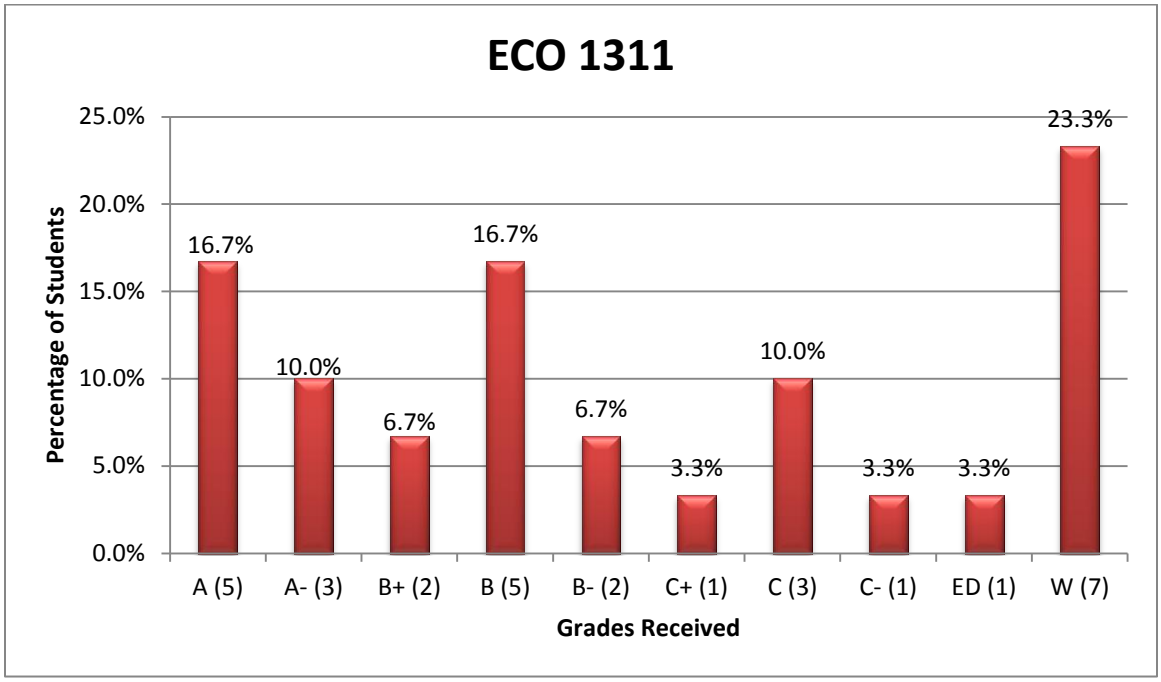
FALL 2011

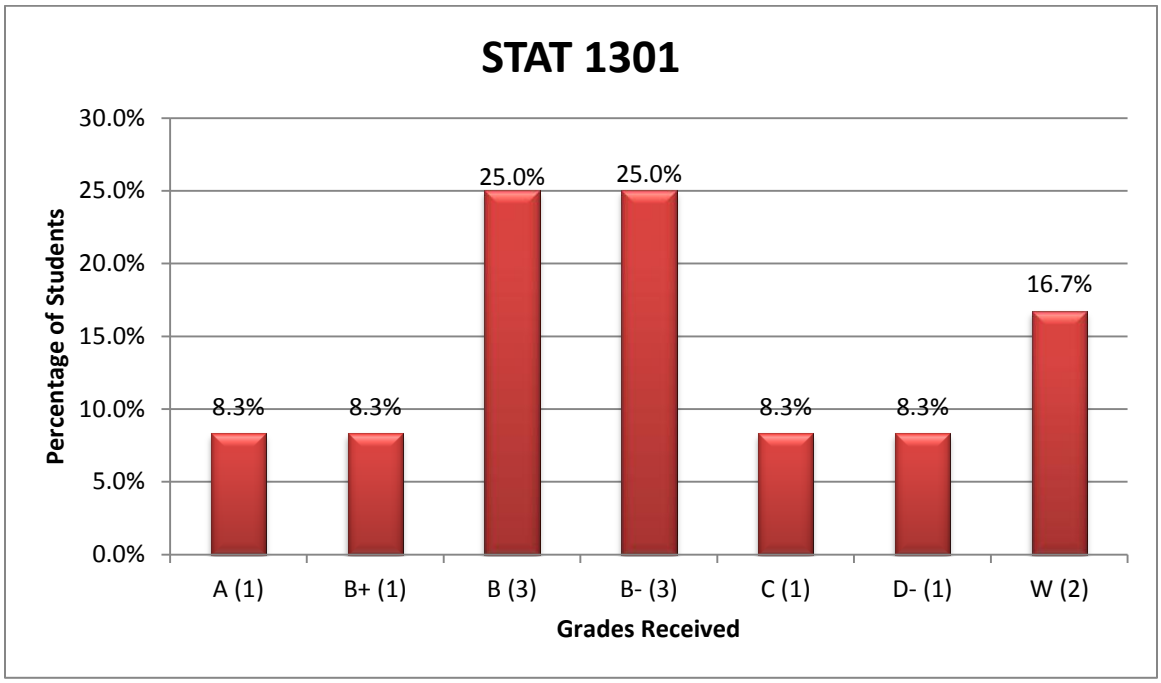
The following charts present grade distribution for identified key courses for the Bridge program participants.

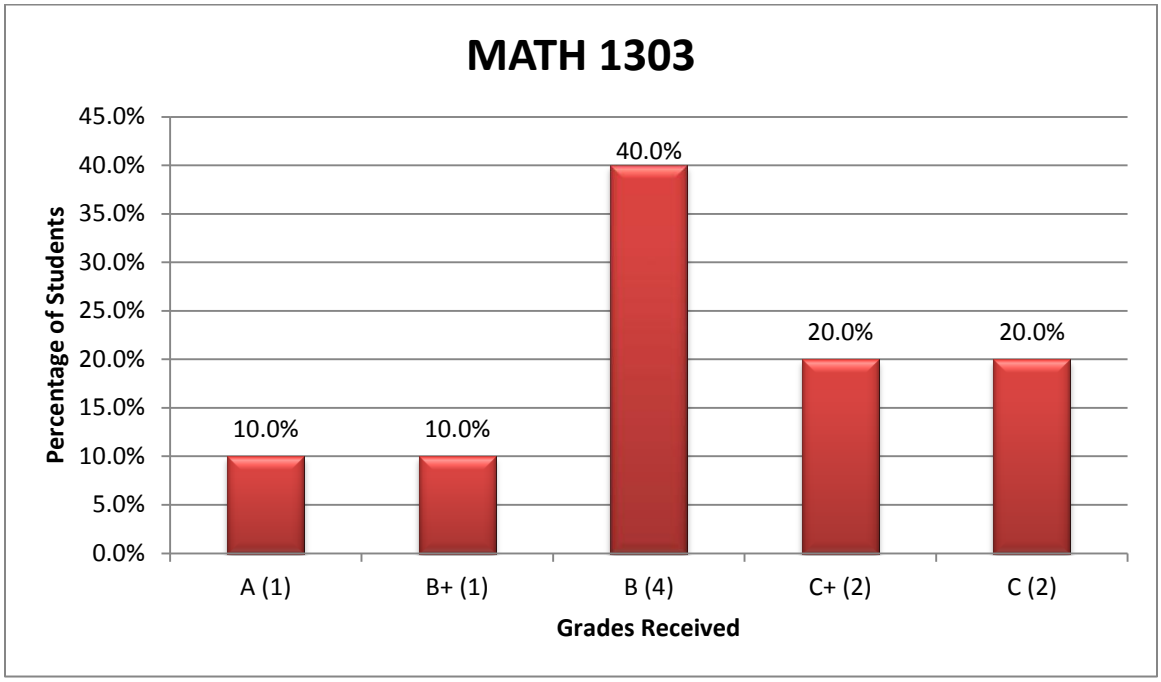


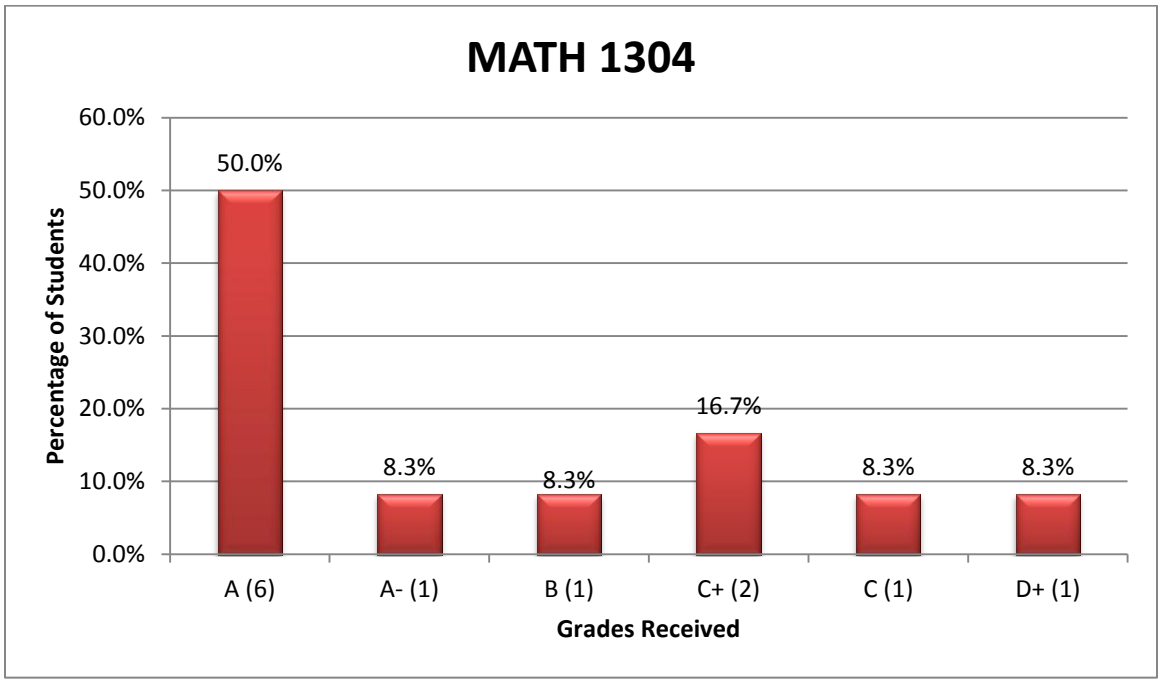

ENGL 1301
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
8.3%
20.8%
29.2%
20.8%
12.5%
2.1%
2.1%
2.1%
2.1%
A (4)
A- (10)
B+ (14)
B (10)
B- (6)
C (1)
ED- (1)
I (1)
W (1)
Grades Received

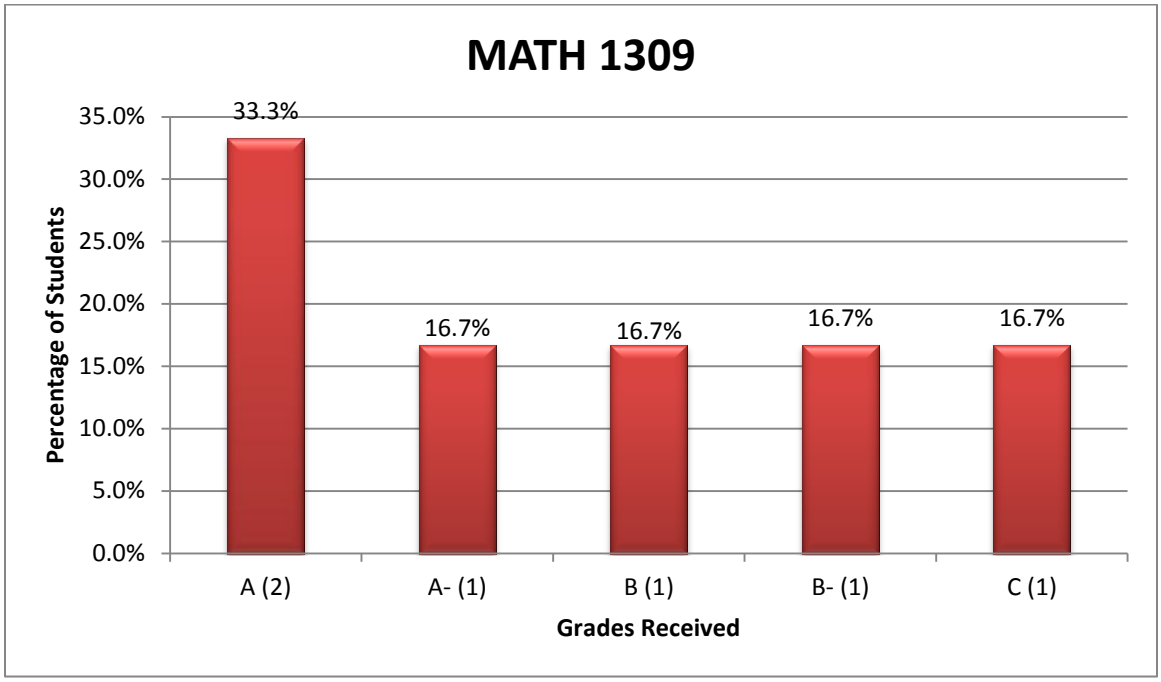

ENGL 1302
20.0%
18.0%
16.0%
14.0%
12.0%
10.0%
8.0%
6.0%
4.0%
2.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
12.5%
12.5%
18.8%
6.3%
12.5%
6.3%
18.8%
6.3%
6.3%
A (2)
A- (2)
B (3)
B- (1)
B+ (2)
C (1)
C+ (3)
D+ (1)
EF (1)
Grades Received

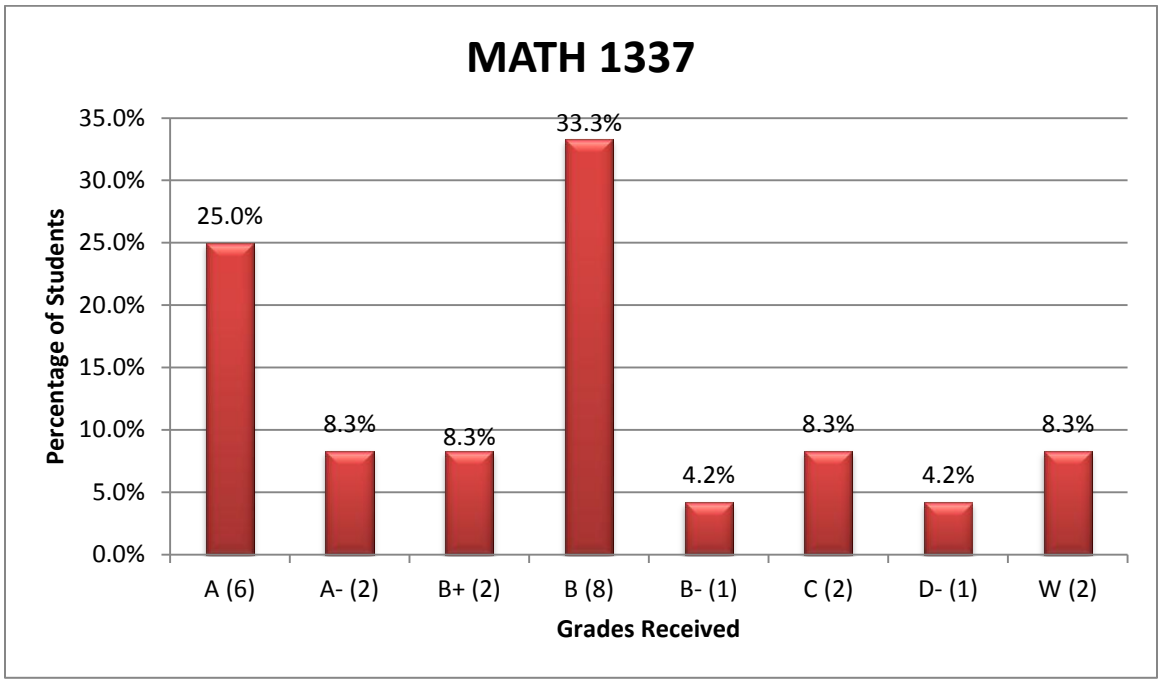

ECO 1311
Percentage of Students
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
16.7%
10.0%
6.7%
16.7%
6.7%
3.3%
10.0%
3.3%
3.3%
23.3%
A (5)
A- (3)
B+ (2)
B (5)
B- (2)
C+ (1)
C (3)
C- (1)
ED (1)
W (7)
Grades Received

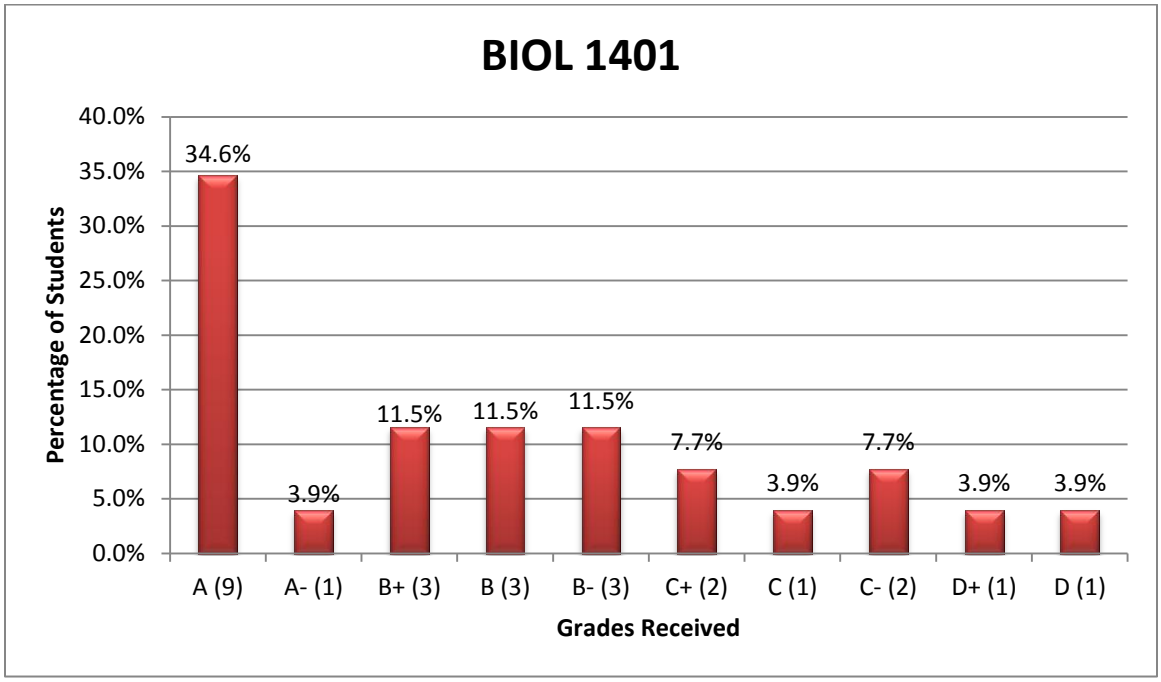

STAT 1301
Percentage of Students
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
8.3%
8.3%
25.0%
25.0%
8.3%
8.3%
16.7%
A (1)
B+ (1)
B (3)
B- (3)
C (1)
D- (1)
W (2)
Grades Received

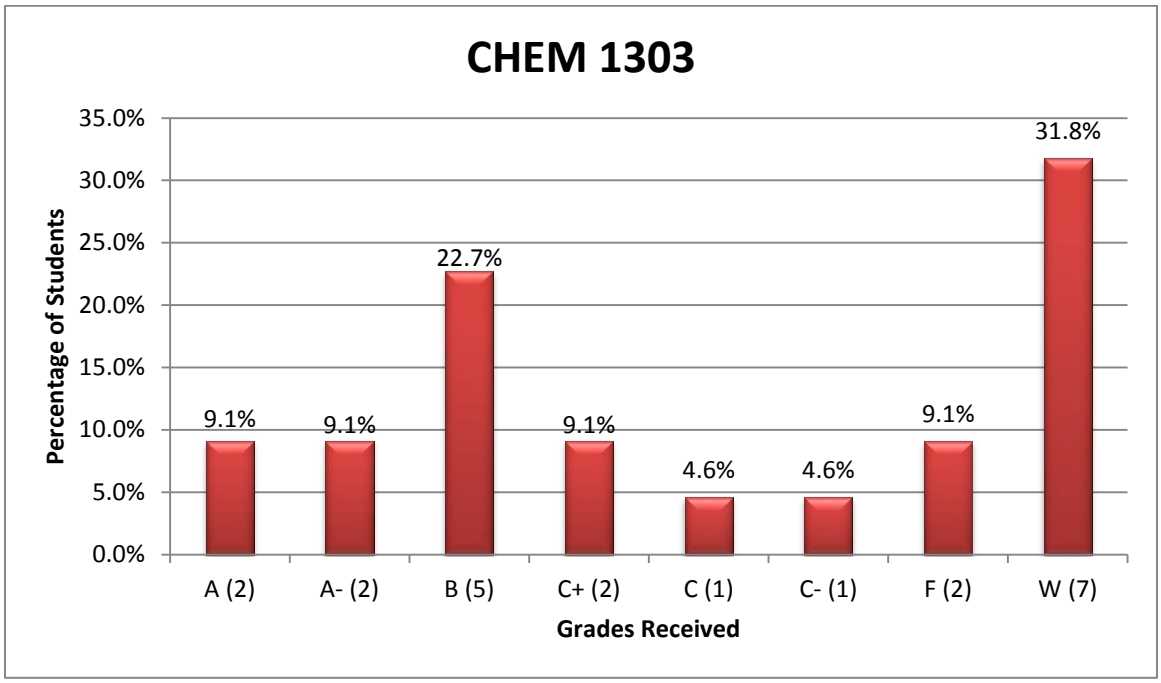

MATH 1303
45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
10.0%
10.0%
40.0%
20.0%
20.0%
A (1)
B+ (1)
B (4)
C+ (2)
C (2)
Grades Received

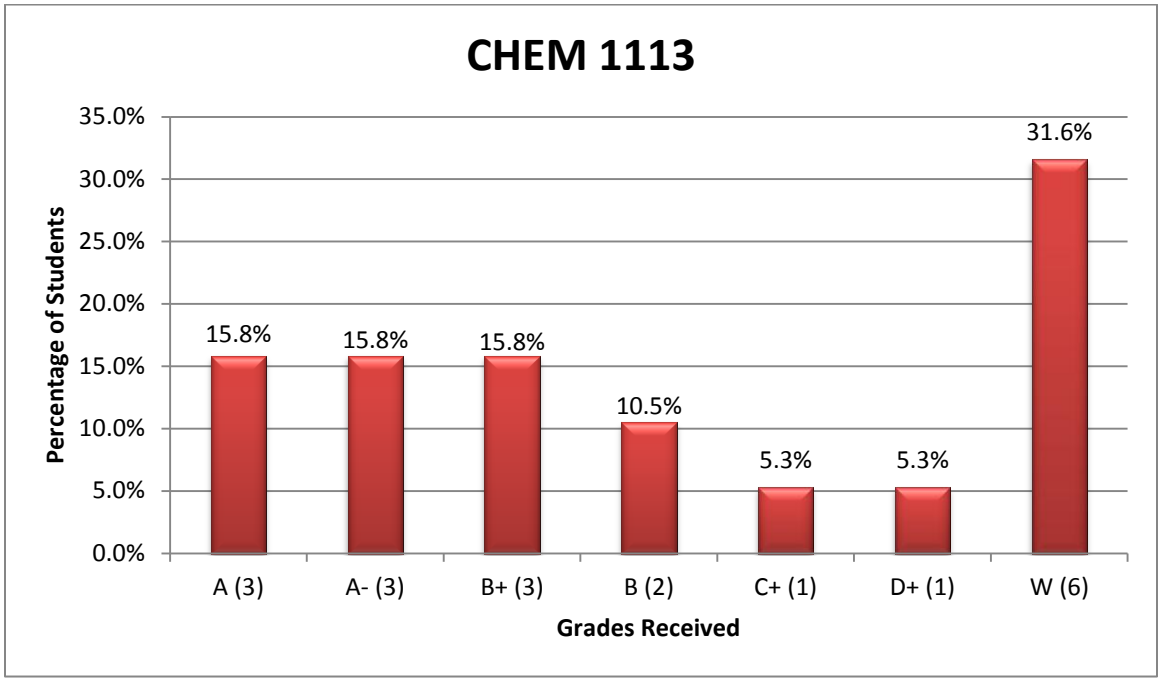

MATH 1304
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
50.0%
8.3%
8.3%
16.7%
8.3%
8.3%
A (6)
A- (1)
B (1)
C+ (2)
C (1)
D+ (1)
Grades Received


MATH 1309
Percentage of Students
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
33.3%
16.7%
16.7%
16.7%
16.7%
A (2)
A- (1)
B (1)
B- (1)
C (1)
Grades Received

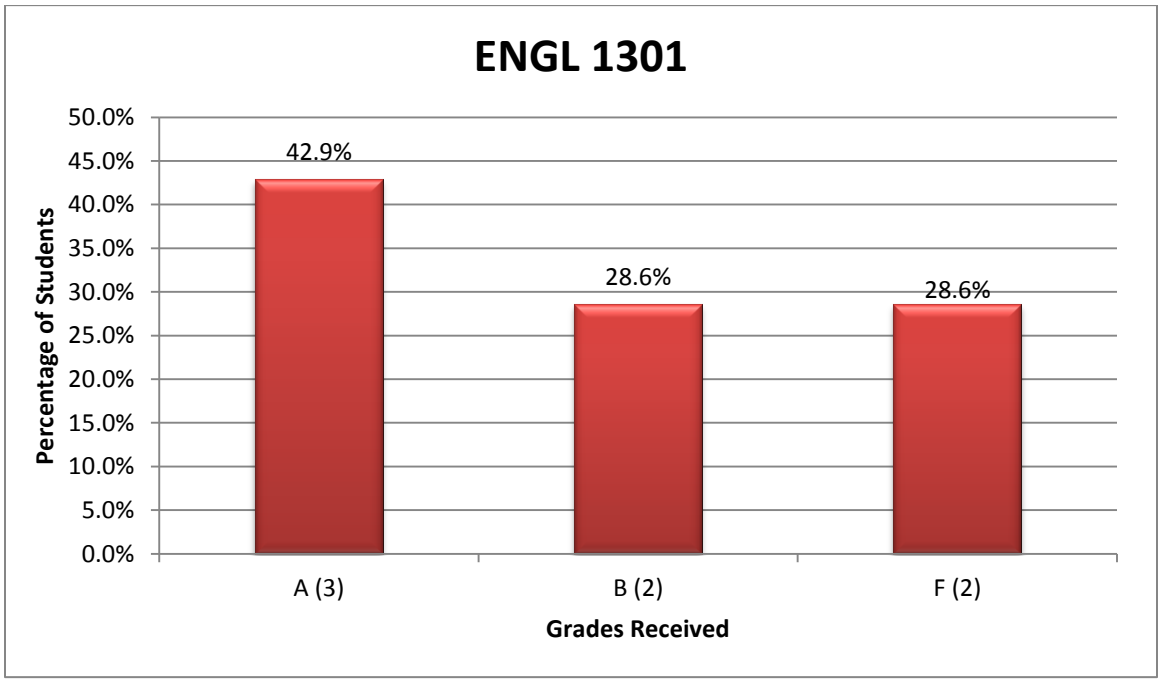

MATH 1337
Percentage of Students
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
25.0%
8.3%
8.3%
33.3%
4.2%
8.3%
4.2%
8.3%
A (6)
A- (2)
B+ (2)
B (8)
B- (1)
C (2)
D- (1)
W (2)
Grades Received

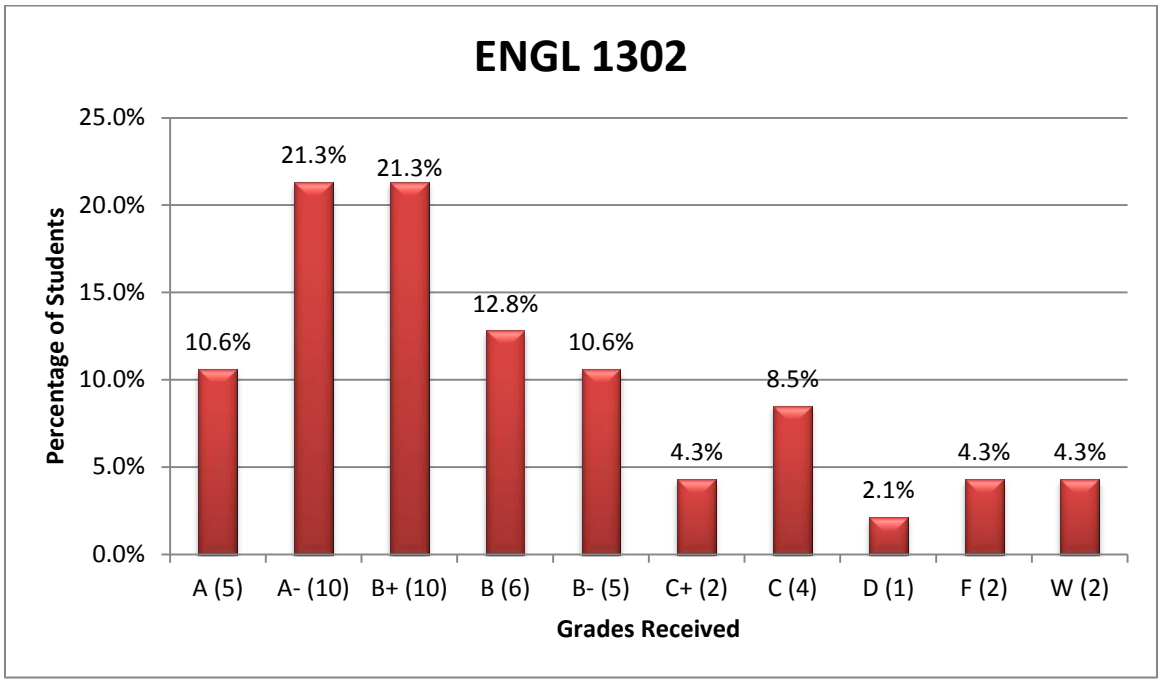

BIOL 1401
Percentage of Students
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
34.6%
3.9%
11.5%
11.5%
11.5%
7.7%
3.9%
7.7%
3.9%
3.9%
A (9)
A- (1)
B+ (3)
B (3)
B- (3)
C+ (2)
C (1)
C- (2)
D+ (1)
D (1)
Grades Received

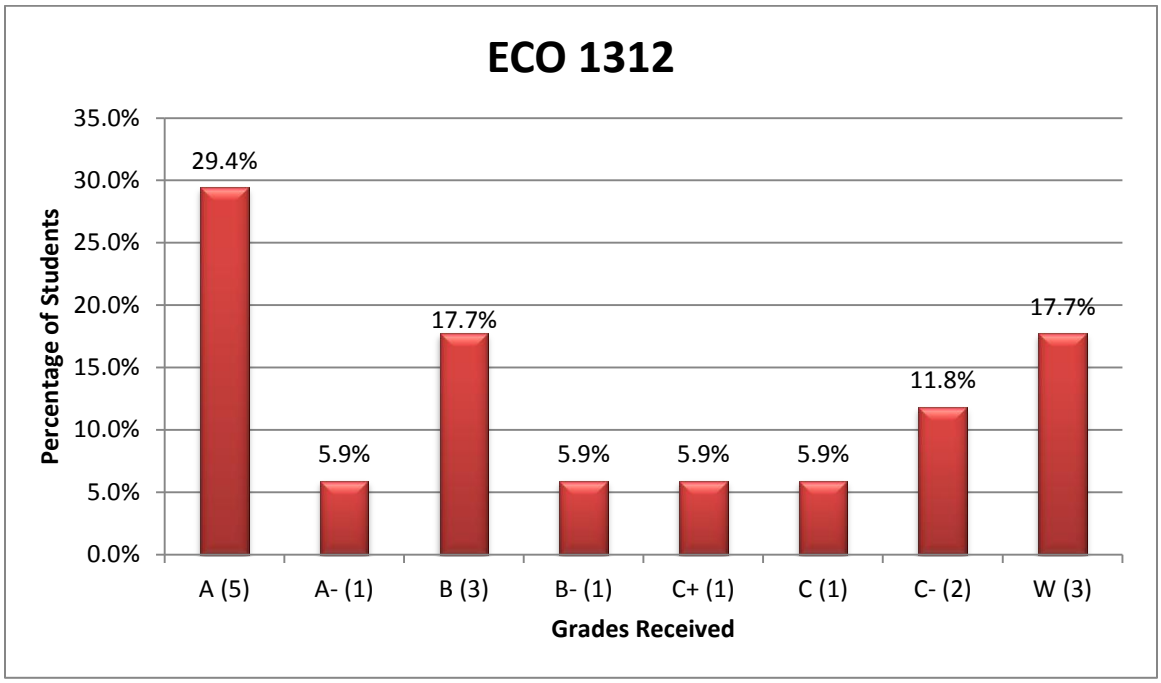

CHEM 1303
Percentage of Students
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
9.1%
9.1%
22.7%
9.1%
4.6%
4.6%
9.1%
31.8%
A (2)
A- (2)
B (5)
C+ (2)
C (1)
C- (1)
F (2)
W (7)
Grades Received

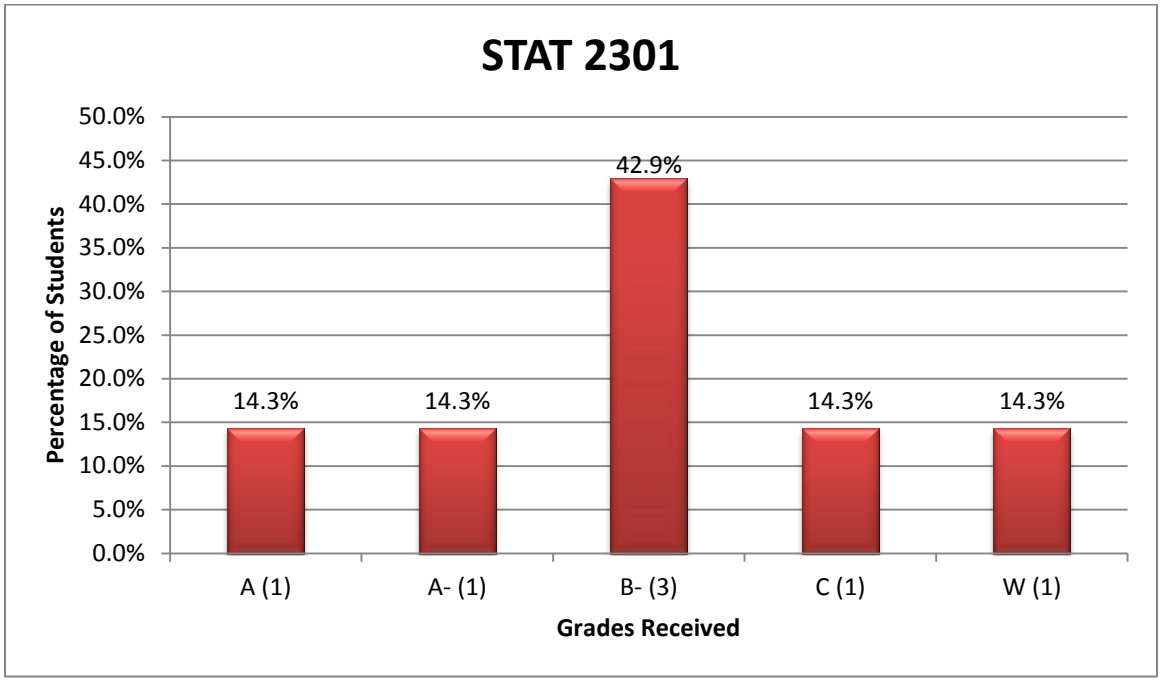

CHEM 1113
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
15.8%
15.8%
15.8%
10.5%
5.3%
5.3%
31.6%
A (3)
A- (3)
B+ (3)
B (2)
C+ (1)
D+ (1)
W (6)
Grades Received

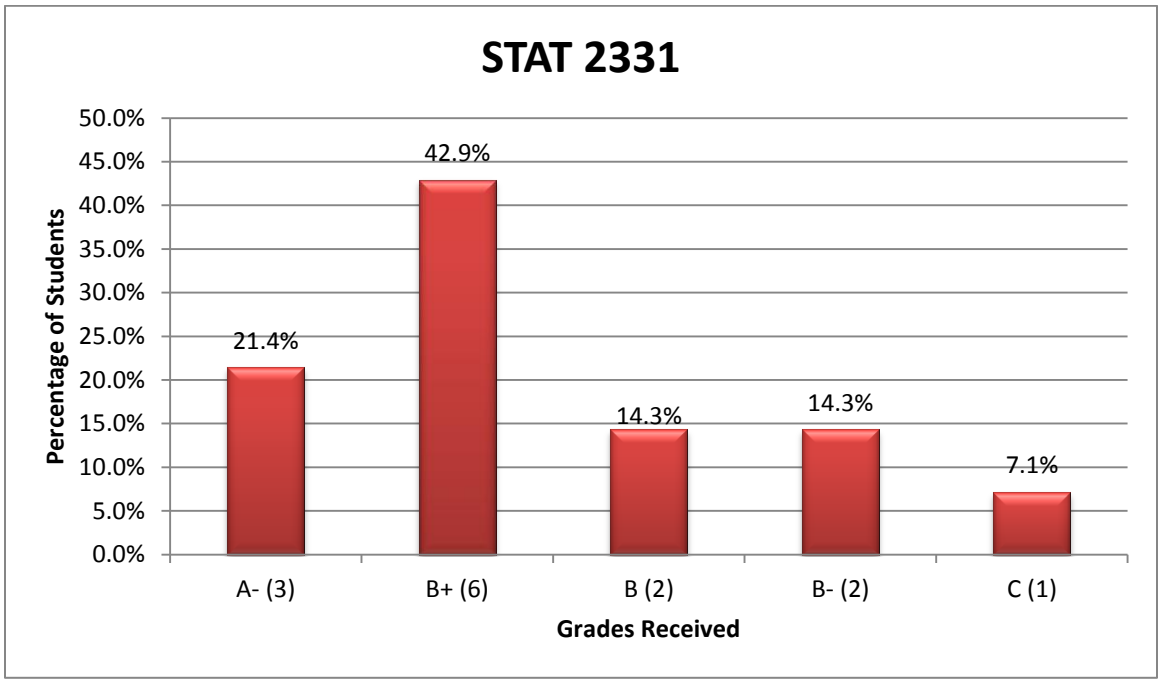
SPRING 2012

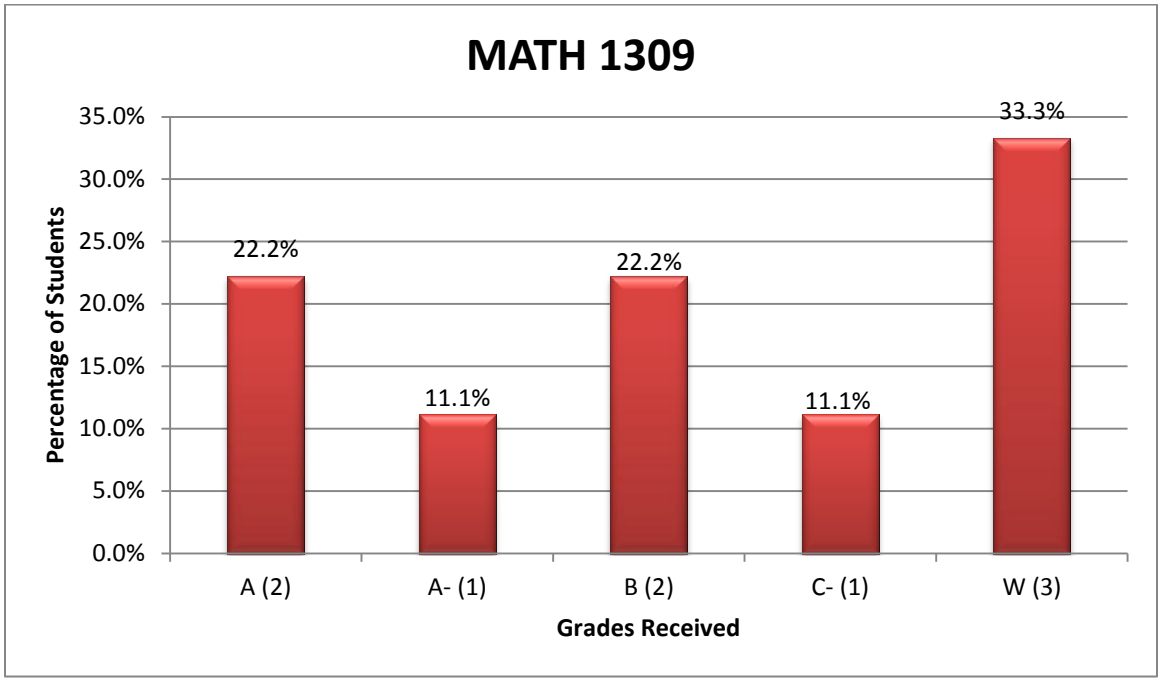

ENGL 1301
50.0%
45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
42.9%
28.6%
28.6%
A (3)
B (2)
F (2)
Grades Received

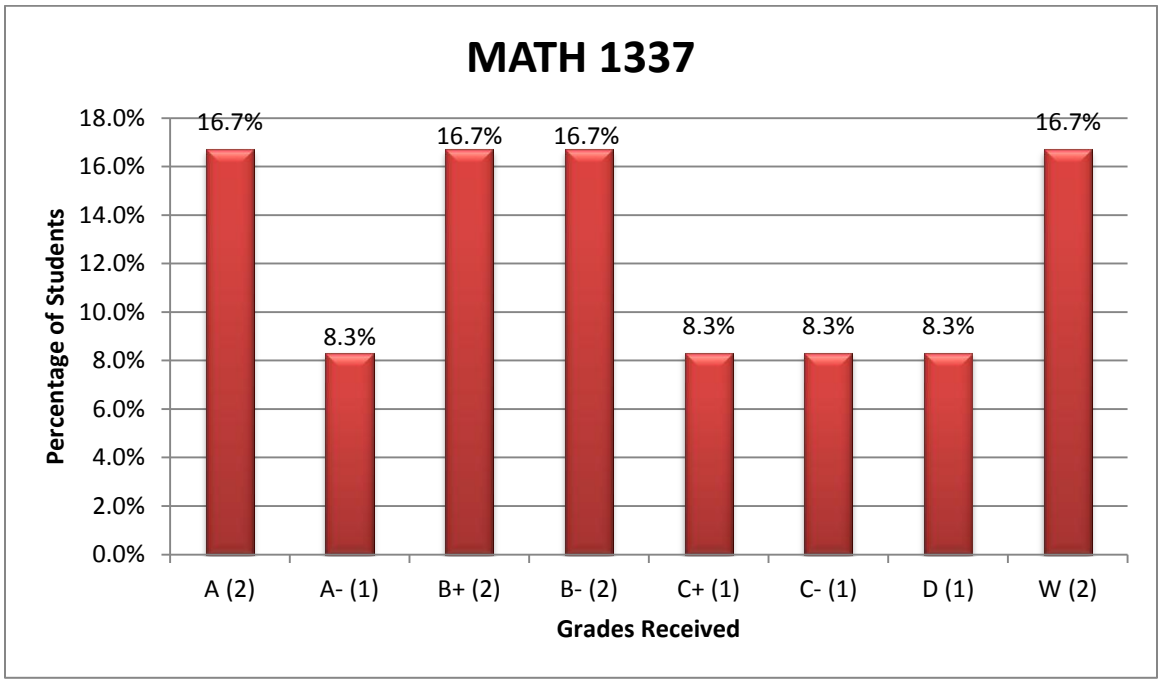

ENGL 1302
Percentage of Students
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
10.6%
21.3%
21.3%
12.8%
10.6%
4.3%
8.5%
2.1%
4.3%
4.3%
A (5)
A- (10)
B+ (10)
B (6)
B- (5)
C+ (2)
C (4)
D (1)
F (2)
W (2)
Grades Received

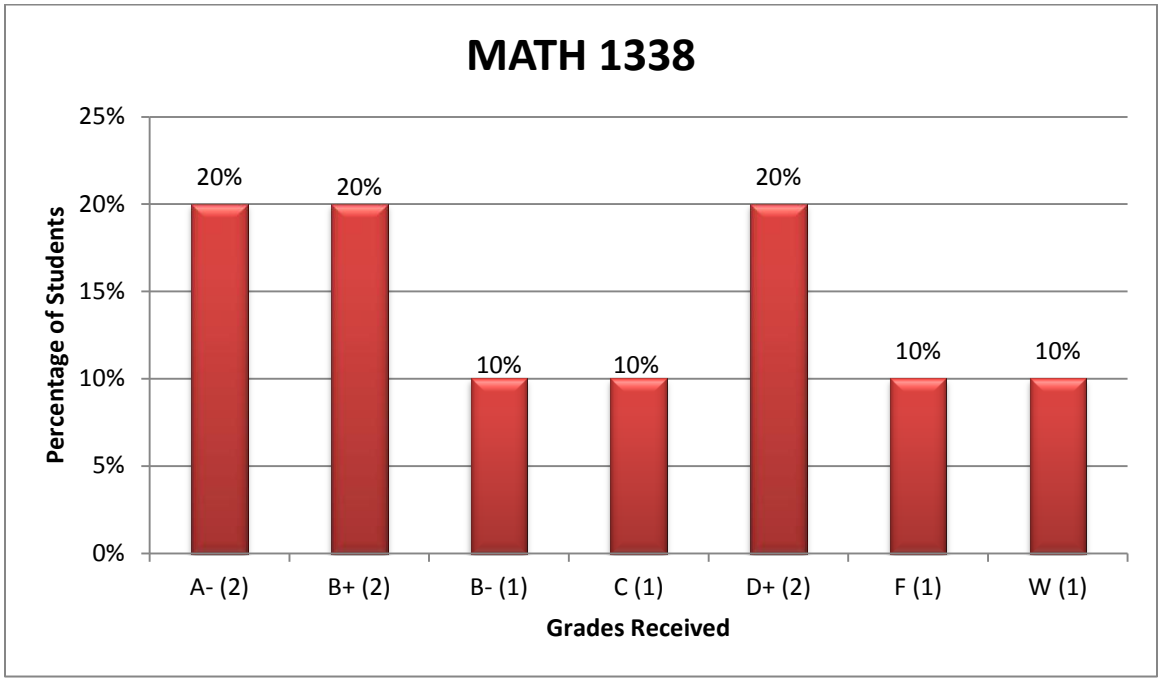

ECO 1312
Percentage of Students
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
29.4%
5.9%
17.7%
5.9%
5.9%
5.9%
11.8%
17.7%
A (5)
A- (1)
B (3)
B- (1)
C+ (1)
C (1)
C- (2)
W (3)
Grades Received

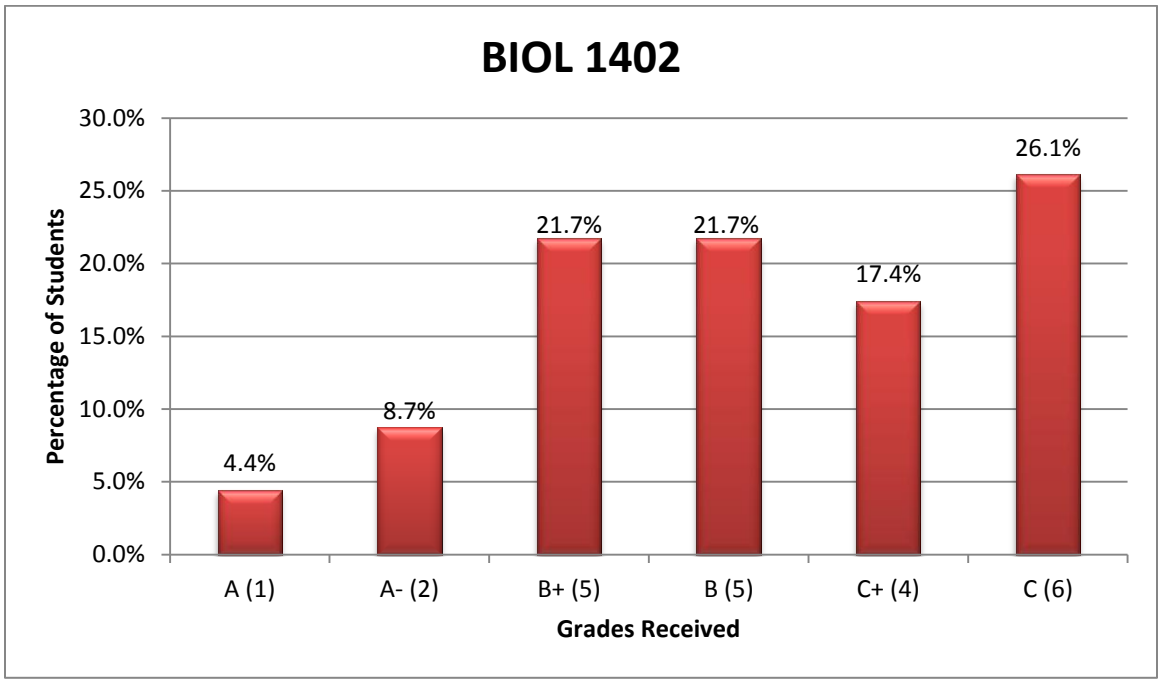

STAT 2301
50.0%
45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
14.3%
14.3%
42.9%
14.3%
14.3%
A (1)
A- (1)
B- (3)
C (1)
W (1)
Grades Received

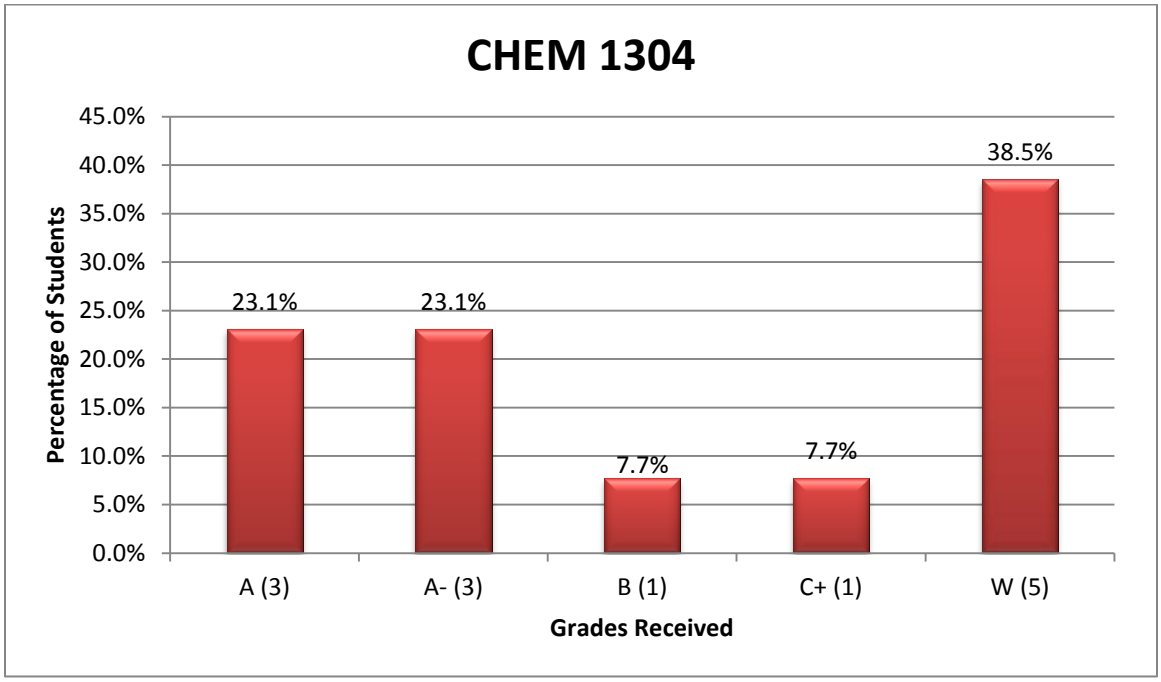

STAT 2331
50.0%
45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
21.4%
42.9%
14.3%
14.3%
7.1%
A- (3)
B+ (6)
B (2)
B- (2)
C (1)
Grades Received

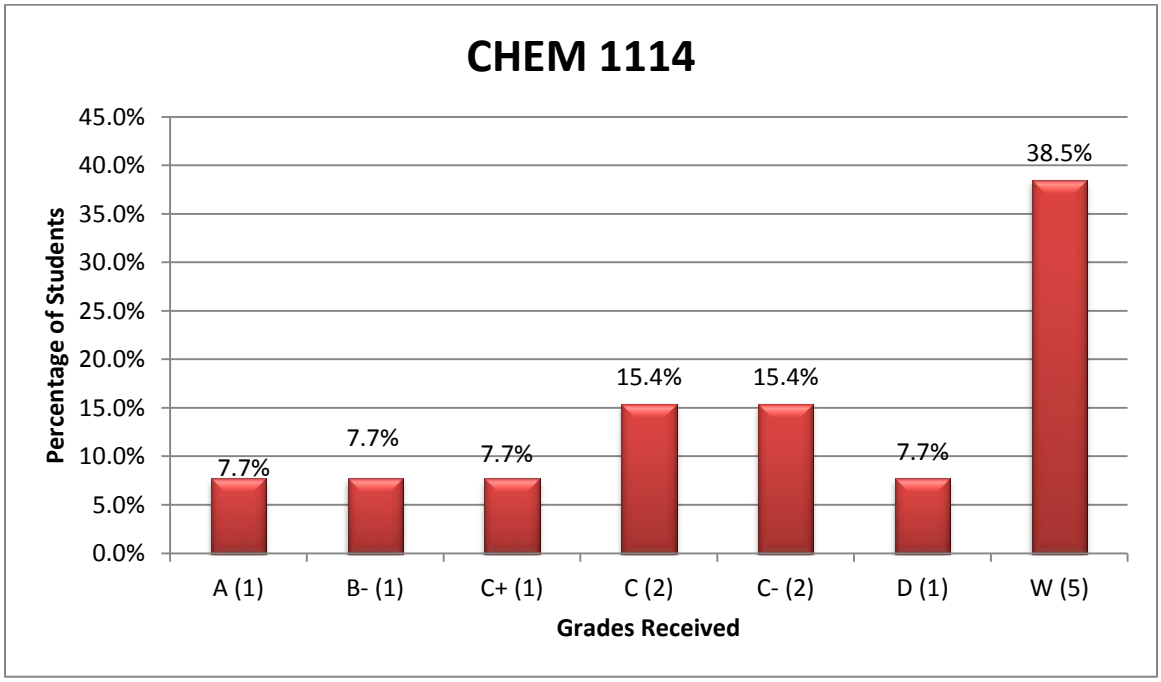

MATH 1309
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
22.2%
11.1%
22.2%
11.1%
33.3%
A (2)
A- (1)
B (2)
C- (1)
W (3)
Grades Received


MATH 1337
18.0%
16.0%
14.0%
12.0%
10.0%
8.0%
6.0%
4.0%
2.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
16.7%
8.3%
16.7%
16.7%
8.3%
8.3%
8.3%
16.7%
A (2)
A- (1)
B+ (2)
B- (2)
C+ (1)
C- (1)
D (1)
W (2)
Grades Received


MATH 1338
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
Percentage of Students
20%
20%
10%
10%
20%
10%
10%
A- (2)
B+ (2)
B- (1)
C (1)
D+ (2)
F (1)
W (1)
Grades Received


BIOL 1402
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
4.4%
8.7%
21.7%
21.7%
17.4%
26.1%
A (1)
A- (2)
B+ (5)
B (5)
C+ (4)
C (6)
Grades Received


CHEM 1304
45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
23.1%
23.1%
7.7%
7.7%
38.5%
A (3)
A- (3)
B (1)
C+ (1)
W (5)
Grades Received


CHEM 1114
45.0%
40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
Percentage of Students
7.7%
7.7%
7.7%
15.4%
15.4%
7.7%
38.5%
A (1)
B- (1)
C+ (1)
C (2)
C- (2)
D (1)
W (5)
Grades Received

STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Based upon the data, students who participated in the Bridge program in the fall and spring semesters performed better academically overall than those who were invited but did not participate in the program. The average GPA and number of credit hours earned is greater for those in the program in the fall semester. In the spring, the average GPA is slightly lower for students in the program, but the average earned credit hours is greater.

During the 2010 – 2011 academic year, the average GPA for the fall semester for students in the program was a 2.87 and average credit hours earned was 14.2. In the spring, the average GPA for students in the program was a 3.08 and average credit hours earned was 14.3. This year, on average students in the program earned significantly higher GPAs in the fall than those in the program last year, which can be attributed to the extended orientation program, as well as peer mentors and counselors. However, the spring semester average GPA was lower overall for the students in the program this year.

FALL SEMESTER

Fall 2011	Bridge Students n = 75	Non-Bridge Students n = 43
Average GPA	3.12	3.11
Lowest GPA	1.45	2.00
Highest GPA	4.00	3.94
Average Earned Credit Hours	14.35	14.21
Lowest Earned Credit Hours	7	9
Highest Earned Credit Hours	18	18

SPRING SEMESTER

Spring 2012	Bridge Students n = 71*	Non-Bridge Students n = 40**
Average GPA	3.04	3.15
Lowest GPA	1.14	2.08
Highest GPA	4.00	4.00
Average Earned Credit Hours	14.25	14.03
Lowest Earned Credit Hours	8	9
Highest Earned Credit Hours	18	17

*Three students in the program withdrew before the end of the spring semester. One student did not return for the spring semester.

**Three students who did not participate in the program did not return for the spring semester.

Academic Probation

Three Bridge students were placed on academic probation following the fall semester. All three students returned for the spring semester, and all but one student raised their GPA to a 2.0 and subsequently returned to good academic standing after the spring semester. This is compared to ten students placed on academic probation following the fall semester during the 2010 – 2011 academic year. Only nine returned for the spring semester, and two of the ten did not return to good standing after the spring semester.

Two of the students on probation this year were on the pre-med/dental track. One entered with transfer credit and took BIOL 3304, as well as CHEM 3371, 3117 in the first semester despite advising to do otherwise from her academic advisor and the pre-med advisor. The other pre-med student began on the biomedical engineering track and took CHEM 1303, 1113, as well as ME 1202, 1102. The third student on probation brought in transfer credit as well, and started in upper level engineering and calculus classes in the first semester.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Five of the Bridge participants did not complete Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) after the spring semester. Two of the students withdrew from the spring term, which led to the deficiency in hours. The other three students are no more than two credit hours from the SAP requirement.

Major Declaration

At the end of the spring semester, 15 of the 75 students in the program are declared majors.

WORKSHOPS AND OUTINGS OVERVIEW

During the fall 2011 and spring 2012 semesters, there were a variety of academic workshops, informational presentations, outings, and social activities coordinated for the Mustang Bridge Program participants. Students were encouraged to attend at least two activities throughout the semester.

In the fall, there were a total of 9 Mustang Academic Bridge Program specific activities. In the spring, there were a total of 5 activities. Additionally, students were strongly encouraged to attend A-LEC workshops, as well as individual meetings regarding academic advising.

Date, Time	**Activity**	**Student Attendance**
August 15-17	Orientation	65
August 25	Mentee/Mentor Mixer	49
September 2-3	Retreat	15
September 8	Monthly Dinner – Study Abroad, ASB	46
October 6	Meadows Museum Tour/Dinner	38
October 15	State Fair of Texas Outing	41
November 10	Monthly Dinner – Career Center	36
November 14-18	Resume Review with Career Center	13
December 6	Holiday Party/Preparing for Finals	39
January 19	Spring Semester Kick Off	33
January 27 – February 3	Mock Interviews with Career Center	4
February 9	Monthly Dinner – Scholarships and Financial Aid	32
March 8	Monthly Dinner – Mentor Opportunities	36
April 27	End of Year Celebration	30

Total # of Activities	14
Total Attendance in Activities	477
Avg. Overall Attendance/Activity	34.1

There was a significant increase in attendance this year, as the average overall attendance last year was 14.9 and the total attendance was 284.

MENTOR PROGRAM

This year we implemented an upperclassman mentor program. These students were in the program during the first year and helped incoming students with their transition to SMU. Mentors are charged to be a peer resource and a year round academic and social support agent during students' first year at SMU. There were 28 mentors this year, and they were matched with 2-3 incoming students.

The Student Coordinator conducted training for the mentors in the fall and spring semesters, as well as held regular accountability meetings to ensure students were performing their duties. Mentors were not compensated monetarily for their time, but they were allowed to participate in all Mustang Academic Bridge Program workshops, dinners, and outings. Additionally, they had the opportunity to apply for scholarships to attend the Alternative Spring Break trips and the Civil Rights Pilgrimage.

INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS OVERVIEW

During the fall 2011 and spring 2012 semesters, the Mustang Bridge Program participants were asked to attend three scheduled individual appointments. These appointments took place around critical periods in the semester to provide students with proactive assistance.

Due to the implementation of the Peer Counseling program, many students took advantage of meeting with their assigned peer counselor, in addition to or in place of a meeting with the Assistant Director for Student Success depending on their level of academic performance. They were asked to meet with their Peer Counselor once a month. With the implementation of the Peer Counseling program, more students were able to receive contact. In the fall, there were 267 individual contacts versus 184 last fall, and this spring there were 257 contacts with students compared to 174 in Spring 2011.

More details on the appointments are outlined below.

FALL 2011 INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS WITH ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Appointment #	Time Frame	Topic/Purpose	Allocated Duration
1	Early fall	*Get to Know Student/First Weeks* • Fill out and Review Self-Assessment Discuss: • 1st Weeks of Classes • Provide Referrals • Grade Deficiencies on Early Intervention Report (if applicable)	60 minutes
2	Mid-semester	*Midterm Progress* Discuss: • Academic Progress • Grade Deficiencies on Midterm Report • Drop Deadline • Holds on Account • Spring Course Selection/Enrollment Appointment: Review DPR and Major Requirements • Campus Services (if necessary)	30 minutes
3	End of Semester	*Preparing for Finals/Spring Semester* Discuss: • Academic Update • Reflection on Fall Semester • Looking Ahead to the Spring Semester	30 minutes
Additional	Throughout semester	Discuss: • Finding a Work Study Position • Resume Review • Judicial Issues • Dropping a Course • Grades • Issues in a Specific Class • Tutoring/Study Sessions • Major Change • Creating a Four Year Plan • Account Balance: Financial Aid,	Varied

		Payment Plans • Summer School • First-Year Repeat Policy	

FALL 2011 INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS WITH PEER COUNSELOR

Appointment #	Time Frame	Topic/Purpose
1	September	• Get to know student • Discuss goals • Discuss academics • Discuss social adjustment
2	October	• Talk about schedule for next semester • Discuss goals • Discuss issues
3	November	• Help with enrolling in spring classes, if needed • Discuss how to effectively utilize winter break • Discuss finals preparation • Discuss overall feeling about 1st semester

Total student contacts = 267

SPRING 2012 INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS WITH ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Appointment #	Start/End Date	Topic/Purpose	Allocated Duration
1	Early spring	*First Weeks* Discuss: • Goals for the semester • Academic Progress • Concerns for the semester • Housing for 2nd year • Financial aid (forms completed?) • Summer plans	Varied
2	End of February	*Early Intervention* Discuss: • Grade Deficiencies on Early Intervention Report • Concerns/Questions	Varied
3	Mid-semester	*Midterm Progress* Discuss: • Academic Progress • Grade Deficiencies on Midterm Report • Drop Deadline • Holds on Account • Summer/Fall Course Selection/Enrollment Appointment • Four Year Plan: Review DPR and Major Requirements • Campus Services (if necessary) • Preparing for Finals	Varied
Additional	Throughout semester	Discuss: • Recommendation Letters • Resume Review • Applying to the UHP • Financial Aid • Scholarship Applications • Summer School • Scheduling Issues	Varied

		• Major Change • Creating a Four Year Plan	
Probation Weekly Check In Meetings	February - April	Discuss: • Academic Progress In Each Course • Issues • Improvement • Utilization of Resources • Preparation for Upcoming Assignments, Tests, Quizzes, etc. • What Worked Well This Week? • What Would You Have Done Differently? • Review Academic Success Agreement	30 minutes

SPRING 2012 INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS WITH PEER COUNSELOR

Appointment #	Time Frame	Topic/Purpose
1	February	• Discuss applying for on-campus housing • Discuss financial aid and scholarships • Talk about summer plans • Discuss goals • Discuss academics • Discuss social adjustment
2	March	• Discuss involvement in program next year • Talk about schedule for next semester • Discuss goals
3	April	• Discuss overall feeling about 2nd semester • Talk about finals preparation • Discuss issues/questions

Total student contacts = 257

STUDY GROUPS

Weekly study groups were offered this year for BIOL 1401, 1402, CHEM 1303, 1113, 1304, 1114, and MATH 1303, 1304, 1309, 1337, and 1338. The study groups took place in the LEC and lasted 50 minutes. Over the course of the year, the Peer Learning Facilitators, upperclassmen who took the course during their first year, provided 189 hours of study group sessions. Attendance was greater in the fall than in the spring, and during both semesters participation should have been higher.

COMMUNICATION WITH FACULTY

Every three weeks during the academic year, an e-mail was sent to faculty teaching ENGL 1300, 1301, 1302, MATH 1303, 1304, 1309, 1337, BIOL 1401, 1402, CHEM 1303, 1304, ECO 1311, 1312, and STAT 1301, 2301, 2331 who had Bridge students in their courses. The feedback from professors allowed the Assistant Director to monitor the academic performance of the students in the program in key gateway courses in order to provide proactive and intentional intervention. Professors were asked to provide comments in the areas of student attendance, class participation, quality of work, timeliness of assignments, etc.

The majority of professors responded to the requests for information every three weeks, and there were a number of professors who contacted Pavielle Chriss regularly regarding student concerns. We found professors genuinely wanted to help their students succeed. They appreciated the opportunity to speak with someone regarding their students who could also reinforce the messages they were conveying to them.

In the fall semester, we communicated with 32 professors across the 6 disciplines. In the spring, we communicated with 43 professors across the 6 disciplines. Overall, professors were satisfied with the Mustang Academic Bridge Program students and genuinely enjoyed having them in their courses. A few comments received from professors are below.

Matthew Kingore, College Writing
As usual, my Bridge students are some of the best in their class. I have no doubt these three will do very well in the course.

Adriana Aceves, Mathematics
All the students in the program are always in class, are enthusiastic, and are doing all the assignments.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In August, an Advisory Committee was formed to serve to enhance the program's continued growth and mission. The committee is comprised of key members of the SMU community, who provide important insights and strategic thinking. The committee members are listed below.

Member	Dept./Division		Member	Dept./Division
Aceves, Adriana	Mathematics		Mohrle, Barbara	Cox
Borzova, Eleana	Engineering		Perez, Linda	Lyle
Eddington, Alicia	Cox		Shattles, Ann	A-LEC
Grumbles, Diana	English		Stephens, Kathleen	University Advising
Hubbard, Kathy	Lyle		Willis, Betsy	Lyle
Jackson, Rod	Admissions		Garner, Ashley	Provost
Jones, Jennifer	Student Affairs		Chriss, Pavielle	Provost
Lewis, Janet	Hegi Career		Tillman, Anthony	Provost

Campus Partnerships

This year we continued to work closely with a number of campus offices and departments to provide resources for the students in the Mustang Academic Bridge Program.

University Central Libraries

Due to the continued partnership fostered by Dr. Gillian McCombs and Pat Van Zandt, the library provided a workshop for students in the new Touch Learning Center to introduce them to the resource. The program also had an assigned librarian, Carol Baker, for students to contact for help with research and navigating the library.

Learning Enhancement Center

The LEC is one of the greatest supporters of the program. Ann Shattles is the designated liaison to the program, and we worked with her to evaluate the A-LEC role in the program, as well as how they can continue to better support our students. The weekly study groups met in one of their study rooms, and they provided a contact for the students to work with in the Writing Center. Based upon referrals from the program staff, the Learning Specialists also worked individually with students in a number of areas including time management, reading speed/comprehension, test anxiety, study skill improvement, etc.

Additionally, Becca Gibson worked in collaboration with the staff to assist the students on academic probation during the spring semester. We consulted on a regular basis to ensure the students were being provided with the support they needed and were progressing towards good academic standing.

Dedman College Advising Center

Throughout the year, Pavielle Chriss continued to attend the weekly advising staff meetings to stay up to date with advising policies and procedures, as well as to build rapport with the advisors and keep the lines of communication open between the two programs. Pavielle also participated in the Major Declaration working group to discuss ways to aid students in exploring and declaring majors earlier during their Undergraduate Career.

Hegi Family Career Development Center

Janet Lewis in the Hegi Career Center presented to students in the program throughout the academic year. In the fall, she provided a general overview of their services, as well as a workshop on the MyPlan assessment and resume writing. In the spring, students were given information on the opportunity to conduct mock interviews and resume review with a Career Counselor. Students were also strongly encouraged to participate in the workshops provided by the Career Center and the Career Fairs.

STUDENT EVALUATION

At the end of the spring semester, student participants were asked to complete an evaluation of the Mustang Academic Bridge Program. Overall, students were very satisfied with their experience in the program. They also found the workshops, monthly appointments, easy access to the Writing Center, and study groups to be helpful resources.

Some of the student remarks regarding how the program helped them in their first year transition are below.

- "Having a mentor and study groups was helpful. It I did not have that, I would have been lost and not known what to do."
- "The program helped me in every aspect, especially academically. I feel like I would not have been as successful without it."
- "The program provided me with resources I would not have known about if I was not in the program. Through the program, I met people with similar interests, ideas, and opinions."
- "By being in the program I felt more comfortable on campus. I knew people already and got to know the campus before everyone else moved in."
- "The assistance I received with scheduling my classes was amazing. I definitely loved that the program holds seats in classes with the best professors."
- "I would have had less friends, support, and resources, if this program did not exist."
- "Without Bridge, I would not have had study groups to attend, which truly did help out my grade in the class."
- "This program informed me about a lot of opportunities specifically for Bridge students. I am most grateful for being sponsored to go on the Alternative Spring Break trip."

Student suggestions for improving the program to better help students with their first year transition are listed below.

- More time management workshops
- More information on internships
- Increase community amongst the group
- Greater emphasis on attending study groups

IMPROVEMENTS IN 2012-2013 ACADEMIC YEAR

Based upon our experiences with the program this year, Advisory Committee recommendations, and student feedback, we are implementing new and significant initiatives in the Bridge Program for the 2011-2012 academic year (see below).

ORIENTATION

From August 13-15, the incoming participants will attend a Mustang Academic Bridge Program Orientation. This will be the second year of the program, and this year we will base the presentations and discussions around the documentary *French Fries are not Vegetables and Other College Lessons*. The orientation will continue to explain the program to students and introduce them to the program staff, as well as other student participants. It will also connect the students to key resources and introduce them to college-level academic skills before classes begin.

MENTOR PROGRAM

In the spring semester, students who participated in the program this past year were recruited to serve as mentors for the incoming Bridge class. Last year, there were 28 student mentors. This year, there are 40 mentors. These students were trained in April and will have a follow up training the first week of classes. They will communicate with their mentees over the summer and will have the opportunity to meet with them during the Mentor/Mentee Mixer on the first Thursday of the academic year. Throughout the fall and spring semesters, the mentors are required to communicate with their mentees every week and attend an event or program once a month.

PEER COUNSELORS

Five Peer Counselors were hired to assist with the program this year. One is a continuing counselor, who will serve as a Senior Peer Counselor and will help with training and supervising the other students. Their purpose is to provide first year students with resources that will enhance their opportunity for academic success and facilitate their transition to college level work. They are hired to provide an additional resource and to serve as positive role models to the program participants. Peer Counselors are expected to foster a sense of community among students in the program, as well as work cooperatively with other staff members to provide educational activities. An initial training for the students took place in the spring and will be followed up with additional trainings throughout the academic year. Peer Counselors will hold office hours (approximately 10 hours a week) for first year students in need of academic and social guidance.

STUDENT COORDINATORS

A Student Coordinator and Senior Student Coordinator were hired to work closely with the Executive Director of Student Development and Programs and the Assistant Director of Student Success Programs. The Student Coordinator will work with the first year students. She will assist with student development and programming through planning and implementing the orientation, retreat, monthly dinners, and other enrichment opportunities. The Senior Student Coordinator will serve as support for the Second Year Program, which will be fully implemented during the 2012 – 2013 academic year. She will also continue to run the mentor program.

WEEKLY REVIEW SESSIONS

We will change the name of study groups to “Weekly Review Sessions” and indicate to students their participation is required in order to stay active in the program. During the 2012 – 2013 academic year, we will add ECO 1311 and 1312 to the weekly review session offerings to support students pursing entrance to the Cox School of Business. The weekly review sessions will continue to take place in the LEC and will last 50 minutes. During orientation, students will register for these sessions in applicable courses and are expected to attend on a weekly basis starting the second week of classes.

SECOND-YEAR PROGRAM

With the assistance of the Senior Student Coordinator, we will continue to provide and further develop programming for second-year students. This programming will focus on helping students achieve certain milestones, which have been proven critical in the second year. These milestones include, but are not limited to declaring a major, creating and fine tuning a four year degree plan, connecting with faculty members, getting involved in extracurricular activities, preparing for graduate school, and career exploration.

CONCLUSION

The Mustang Academic Bridge Program continues to be a success in its second year of operation. This success of the Program can be attributed to the continually overwhelming support which is provided by the Provost, Dr. Paul Ludden; the support of the Department Chairs in English, Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Mathematics and Statistics; the reception by SMU faculty and staff; student participation and acceptance of Program values; and the efforts put forward by Bridge Program staff and student employees. The Program and its concept continue to be embraced by the entire campus community.