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# What Constitutes College Text- Readiness at Your Institution? One College's Cross-Discipline Audit

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# Session Overview

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- Norm:
  - Questions for consideration
  - Shifting focus of developmental education
  - Local context
  
- Sonya:
  - Project purpose, scope, and design
  - Preliminary findings
  - Implications for the field

# Questions to Consider

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- What is the goal of developmental reading instruction?
- What is current focus of developmental reading instruction?
- What does it mean to be college text-ready?
- How does each institution view text-readiness?

# Global Context

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- Developmental coursework is a mode of access to higher education (NADE, 2010)

HOWEVER...

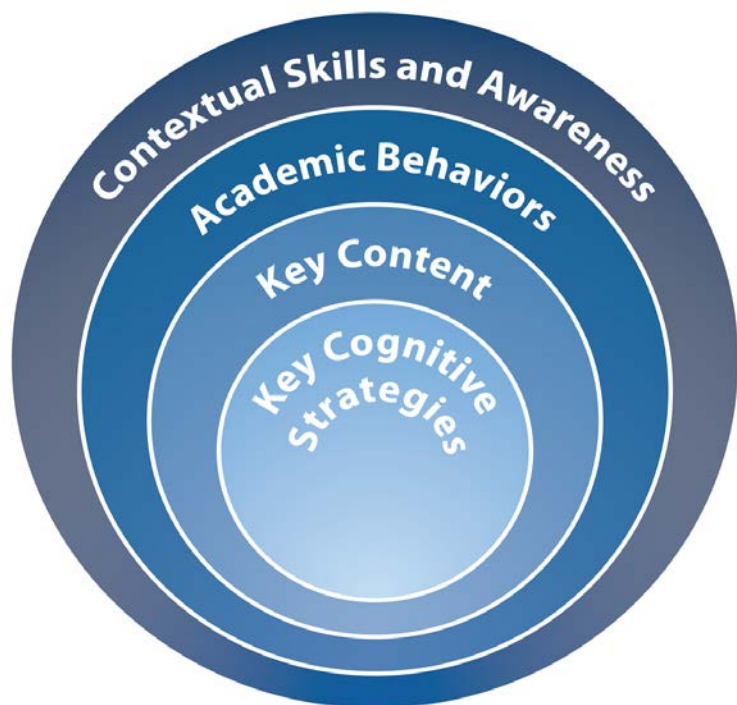
- Efficacy is being questioned (e.g., Calcagno & Long, 2008; Jenkins, Jaggars, & Roska, 2009; Martorell & McFarlin, 2007; Vandal, 2010)
  - Increasing enrollment in developmental courses (e.g., American Institutes for Research, 2006; Associated Press, 2006)
  - Degree completion (Wirt, et al, 2004, para. 3)

# Global Context: College Readiness

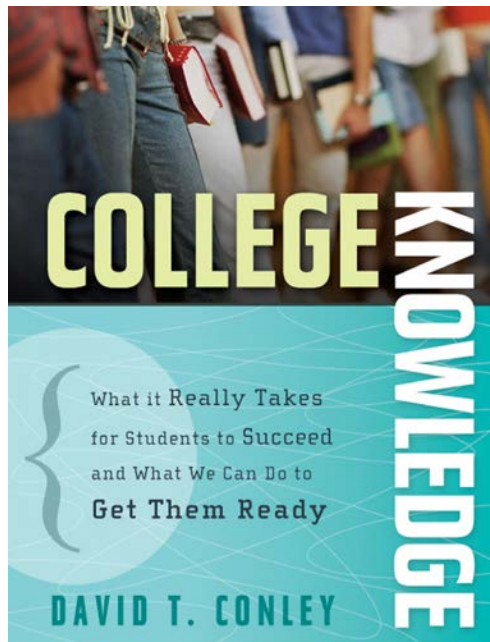
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- Educational pipeline
- Cross-level alignment issues
- Adoption of Common Core Standards
- Conley's (2007) notion of college-readiness

# Research to Practice



Conley, D. (2007). *Redefining college readiness*



Toward a More Comprehensive Conception of  
**College Readiness**

Prepared for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, March 2007



# Developmental Reading

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*...in theory*

# Realities?





# Impacting Practice: New Definition

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## **College & Career Readiness**

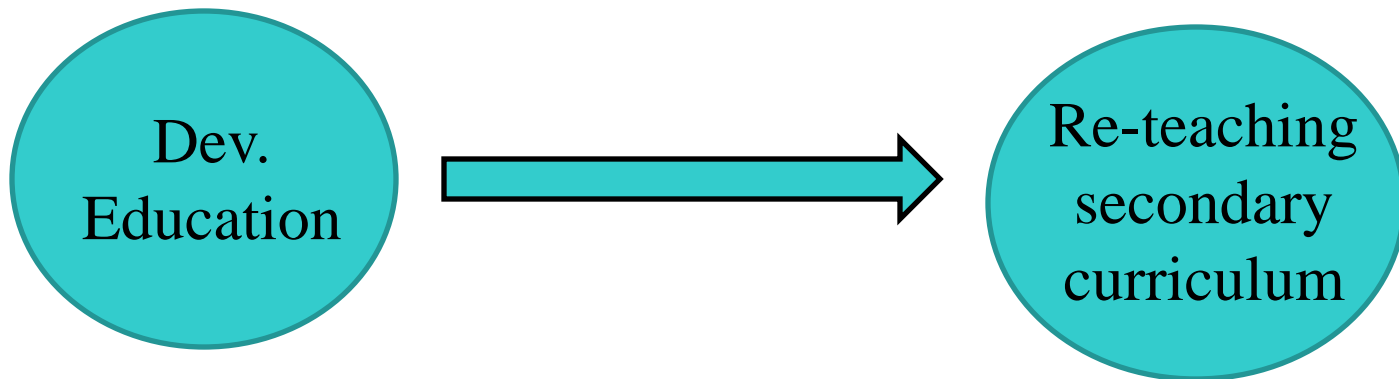
The key intellectual content knowledge, skills, dispositions, and attributes needed to complete entry-level, credit-bearing, general education courses across a range of subjects and disciplines.

Conley, Aspengren, Gallagher & Nies, 2006 for America Diploma Project

# Shift: Purpose

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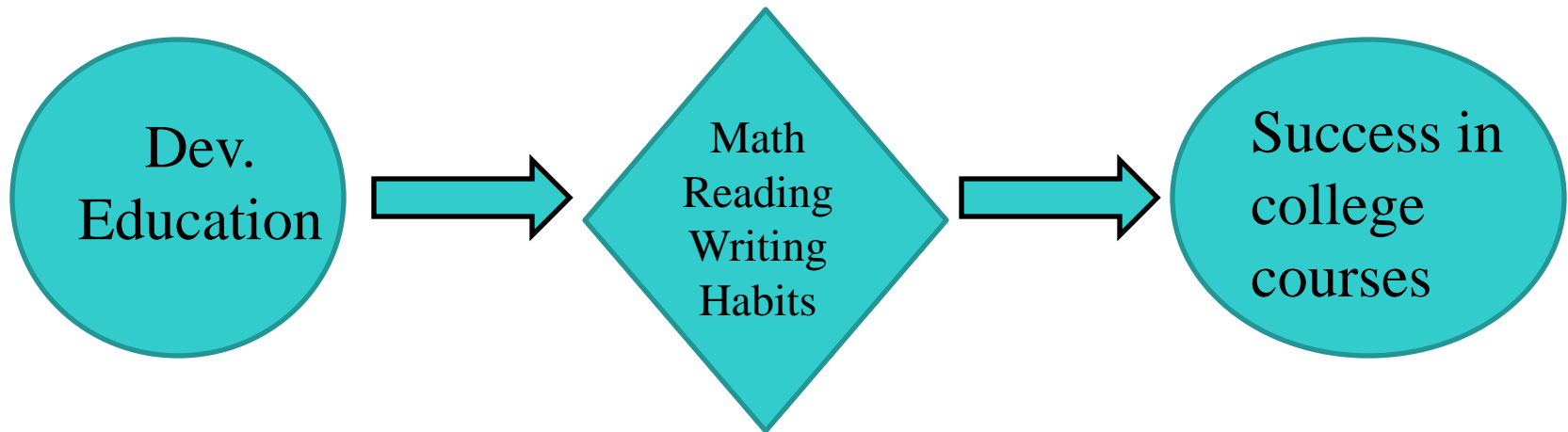
From:



# Shift: Purpose

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To:



# Impacting Practice: State Initiatives

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## ICCB Developmental Education Advisory Committee

- Align high school exit learning outcomes to entry-level English and Mathematics courses
- Align Adult Education ASE exit learning outcomes to entry-level English and Mathematics courses
- Align dev. education course syllabi to ELA and Mathematics Common Core Standards
- Align college placement assessments to Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

# Local Context

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Developmental  
Reading  
Coursework



General and  
Occupational  
Education  
Coursework

# Joliet Junior College

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30% Academic intention is to transfer to  
4-year institution

36.5% Placement into developmental

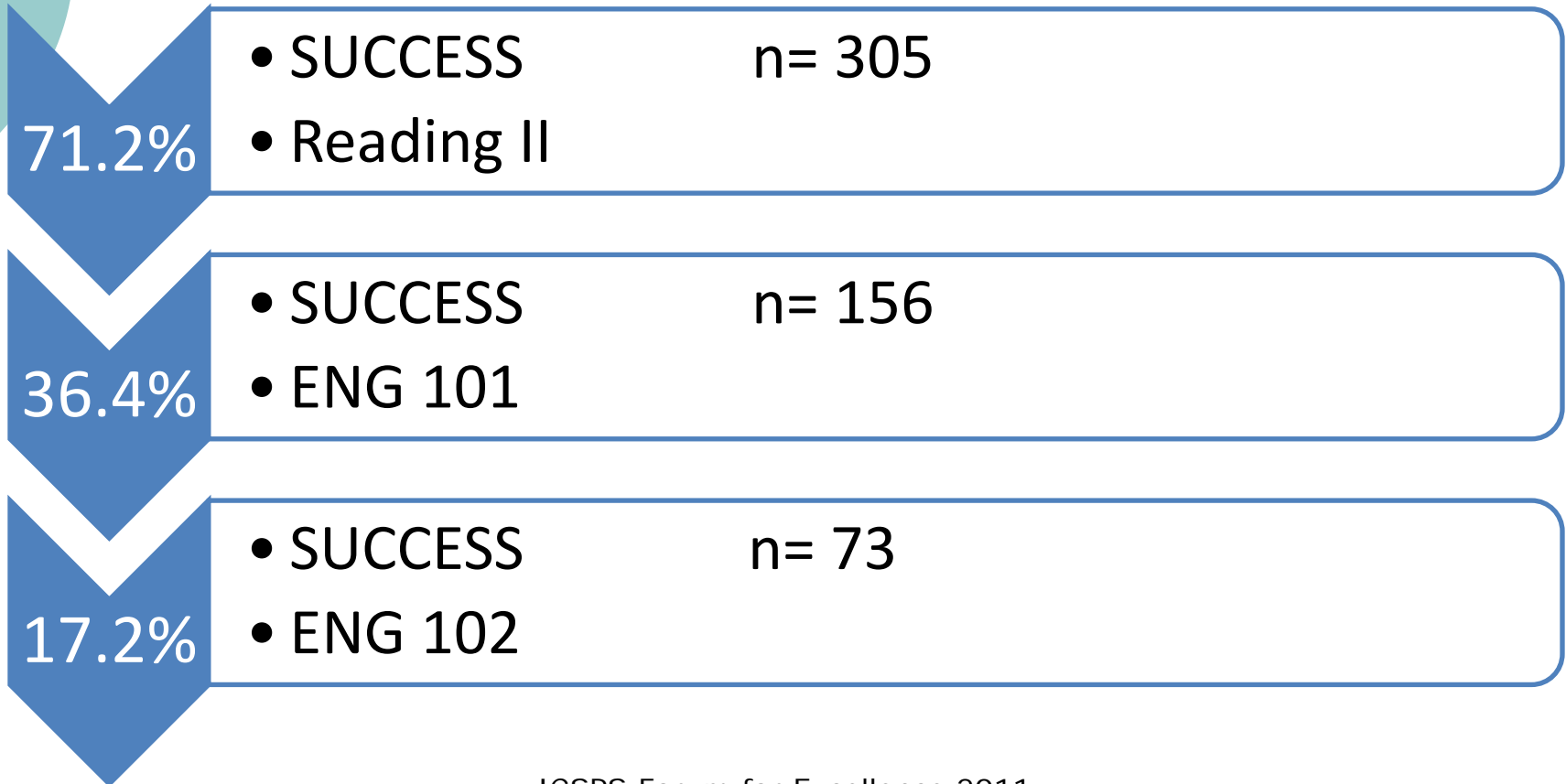
**Reading** 1<sup>st</sup>-time fulltime students FA 08

Compass      0-65                      66-80

65.6% Enroll into developmental Reading  
during 1<sup>st</sup> semester

# Persistence/Retention Reading II → ENG 102

N = 429 Enrolled ENG 021 (FA 08)



# Needed Information

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Definition of the institutional culture and philosophy of reading:

What does it mean to be college text-ready at Joliet Junior College?



# Audit Purpose

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- examine the current developmental reading instruction

AND

- examine the current introductory-level general and occupational education courses

IN ORDER TO

- determine if students are being adequately prepared for reading expectations

# Audit Scope

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- Currently focused exclusively on reading
- Introductory-level general and occupational courses
- Institutional culture of reading

# Primary Research Questions

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- What constitutes college-level text-readiness at Joliet Junior College?
- What are the text-expectations, including text types, tasks, and goals?
  - In developmental reading courses?
  - In general education courses?
  - In occupational education courses?
- How do these text-expectations align?

# Audit Design

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- Dual, simultaneous phases of data collection
- Qualitative and quantitative approaches

# Data Sources

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- Artifacts
  - Syllabi, course schedules, class schedules, textbooks, standard course and/or departmental assessments
- Focus groups
  - Faculty, part-time instructors, students (currently enrolled, previously enrolled, never enrolled in developmental reading)
- Survey data
  - Online adaptation of Simpson's (2003) "Academic Literacy Questionnaire"
- Field notes from classroom observations

# Initial Results: Faculty Surveys

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- 89 of 130 respondents (68%) indicated that they expected students to read more than 10 pages each week from the course text(s)
- 47 of 130 respondents (36%) indicated that they expect students to be able to understand on their own the concepts from the assigned textbook “most of the time”
  - 54 other respondents (42%) indicated that their expectation was that students understand the text independently “occasionally”

# Initial Results: Surveys (cont'd)

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- 100 of 130 respondents (77%) reported that they explain the vast majority (over 75%) of concepts from the text during their lectures
- 74 of 130 respondents (57%) reported that they explain the text's organization and structure in class lectures
  - 100 of 130 respondents (77%) indicated that they provide information to students on how to read and study to prepare for exams

# Initial Results: Observations

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- Text visibility
  - Professor copy in view in 9 of 13 classes
  - Text displayed for students in 3 of 13 classes
- Text referencing
  - Direct text references in 11 of 13 classes
- Text discussions
  - No discussion of text organization or structure
  - Strategy for reading the course text discussed in 1 of 13 classes



# Initial Results: Faculty Focus Groups

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- Respondents reported
  - student text-readiness ranges widely
  - variation in student attitudes toward reading
  - many students do not read course texts as a result of their attitudes toward reading

# Initial Results: Student Focus Groups

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- Respondents expressed frustration with
  - placement process
  - level of rigor in the developmental reading courses
  - level of reading in content-area courses
  - overall rigor of college work (compared to high school work)
  - overall textbook usage and quality

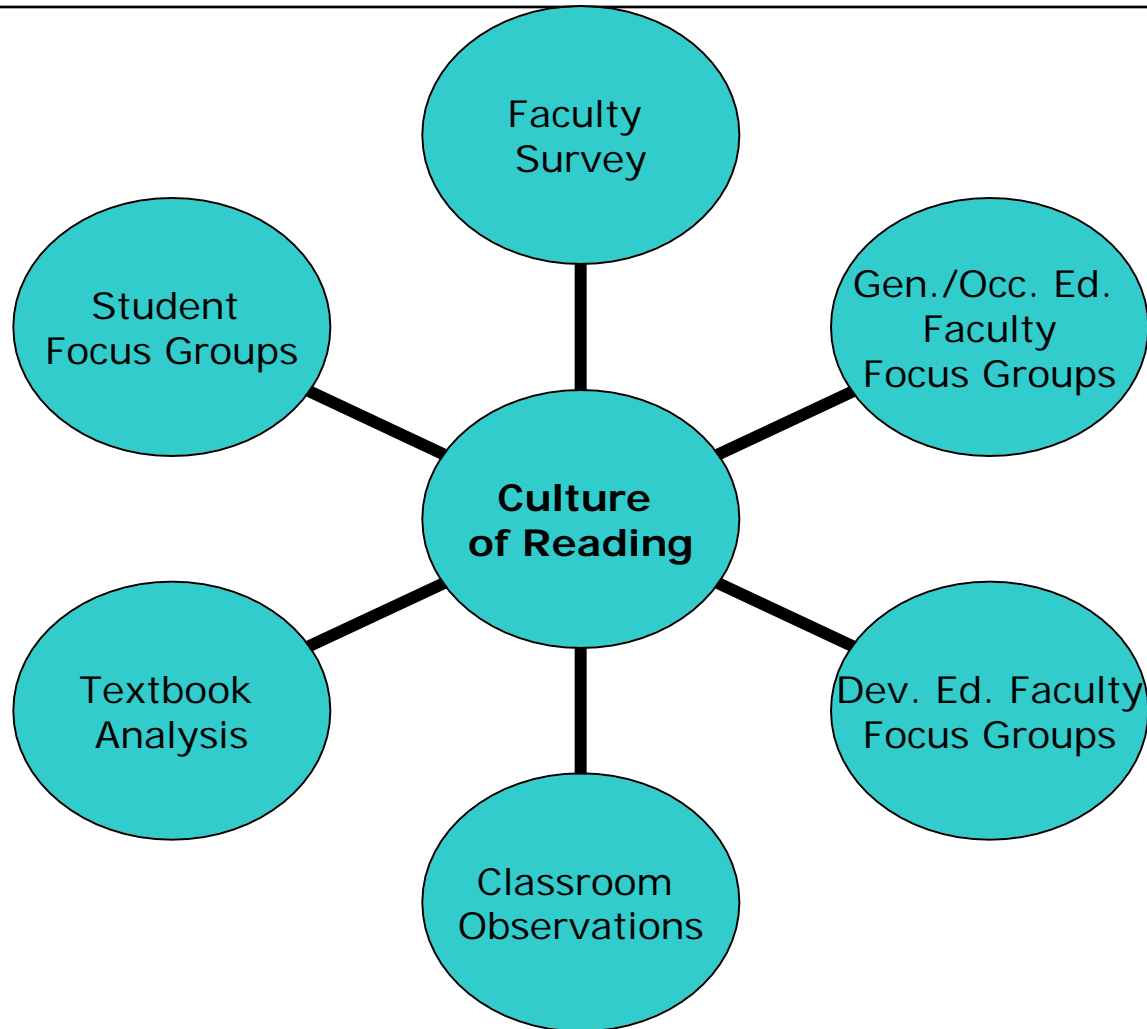
# Initial Results: Textbook Analyses

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- 4 full-page selections from all texts (1<sup>st</sup> page, 1/4, 1/2, 3/4)
  - Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level
  - Gunning-Fog Index
  - Coleman-Liau Index
  - SMOG Index
  - Automated Readability Index
- Total average of the Average Grade Level score for all selections
  - 7 Introductory (college-level) content-area textbooks (12)
  - 5 Developmental reading textbooks (7.6)

# Culture of Reading

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# Convergences and Contradictions

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- Convergence: Faculty view on textbooks
- Contradiction: Faculty textbook usage
  
- Convergence: Broad/general faculty text-expectations
- Contradiction: Definitions and specific text-expectations

# Implications for the Field

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- Auditing protocol to be replicated in other community colleges and developmental programs
  - Instrumentation
  - Results, findings, implications
  - Increased awareness of text readiness issues, especially related to developmental education

# Next Steps:

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Use findings to develop student planning guides which give recommendations for general education courses/developmental reading concurrent enrollments

Transform reading curriculum to address discipline-specific reading strategies

Adapt data collection tools for college-writing audit

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