

Survivor Math

Research supports the use of learning communities for first-quarter students. For the purposes of this program, learning communities are to focus on students in learning support math courses. The television series *Survivor* is a popular reality program that creates tribes from groups of participants with the intention to survive in a very remote island or jungle. These tribes work together and learn together as they take part in a series of activities. In the *Survivor Math* program, student groups referred to as cohorts are created with the intention of working together and learning together to survive the “math jungle” environment and to develop the skills necessary for their experiences beyond the math courses and into their careers.

The fundamental intentions of this effort are:

- Renovation of the former PLATO lab into a more student-centered environment for delivery and supplemental instruction.
- Cohorts - Students in MAT 0097, MAT 0098, and MAT 0099 will be grouped by major.
- Students will be assigned a Success Coach.
- Students will attend the Student Success Course, COL 0099.
- Students will meet individually with their Success Coach during the quarter.
- Implementation of an “Early Warning” system.
- Use of additional faculty embedded with the cohorts.
- Students will meet with the Chair of their program.

PLATO. A review of historical data shows a particular disparity between the success of math students in the classroom setting and those using the PLATO lab. Students taking MAT 0097 in the PLATO lab later successfully completed their core math course at a 55 percent rate whereas those students from an instructor-led MAT 0097 course completed at a 63 percent rate. In response to the question “I learn better at my own pace in a computer lab” on the

program-level student survey (n=40), the response was one of the least agreed-upon. In another student survey (n=135) a question utilizing a seven-choice forced-ranking response to the question “In helping students reach their course goals” had “Computer lab instruction” as the second lowest ranked choice for all three categories of students. These and other survey results are found in Appendix VIII and Appendix IX.

Cohorts. Students from the three courses MAT 0097, MAT 0098, and MAT 0099 will be a part of various learning communities. These learning communities are grouped by fields of study and referred to as cohorts. This division of programs is listed in Table 24 below:

Table 24 Program Learning Communities

Learning Support Course	Program group	Programs
MAT 0097	Aerospace and Design	MCH , WLD
	Allied Health	DEN, NSG, SUR, MAS
	Business and Information Tech	BAT, ACC
	Industrial Technology	ACT, AST, AUT
	Personal and Public Services	BAR, COS, CRJ, ECE
MAT 0098	Aerospace and Design	AMT, DDF, MCH
	Business and Information Tech	CIS
	Industrial Technology	IST, ELC
MAT 0099	Aerospace and Design	AMT, DDF
	Allied Health	RAD, DHY
	Business and Information Tech	ACC, BAT, CIS
	Industrial Technology	ELC
	Personal and Public Services	CRJ, ECE, PLS

Success Coach. There is a designated Success Coach for each cohort of students. The Success Coach encourages students to be self-motivated, responsible, and self-managed. The Coach will help students establish a plan for success at Middle Georgia Technical College. This coach has a number of responsibilities; one of these is to create a connection between the student and the College. The Success Coach may teach the COL 0099 course. The components listed below are valuable tools for the Success Coach and the student to use.

- Academic monitoring one to two times per quarter.
- Establishing connections between students and their MGTC program faculty.
- Collaborative Academic Advising involving MGTC program faculty.
- Creating a sense of accountability within the student.
- Establishing milestone benchmarks for each student as a means to visualize success.
- Involving different speakers and programs throughout the quarter.
- Discussing topics pertinent to the MGTC student experience in a roundtable format.
- Teaching student success skills, (i.e. study skills, note taking, organization, time management).

The Success Coach may conduct the Student Success Course grouped with the cohorts listed above. Appendix VII displays the job description adopted for the Success Coach.

Student Success Course. Each Learning Community will attend the Student Success Course, COL 0099. There will be a number of sections of this course available and more than one cohort may attend a particular course. A description of this course follows: This course is designed to assist students in acquiring study and success skills; the study skills component includes time management, reading textbooks, note taking, and test taking skills. Success skills focus on classroom strategies and available support services.

The objectives for this course are to:

- Give students a clear overview of the academic program, culture, and expectations.
- Outline the skills needed to be successful in college and the workplace.
- Provide supportive resources for success.
- Strengthen students' college success and self-management skills.
- Build relationships with faculty and students in program groups.

Early Warning. Early Warning is a system of communication for those at MGTC who are invested in the academic pathway of a student. When one of the stakeholders of student success, especially the faculty from Learning Support courses, detects the possible jeopardy of a student on his or her academic pathway, a one-time email to others (below) can be created. The email will communicate the condition of the student and the particular jeopardy detected. This message would be sent to:

- The student's faculty advisor, so that he or she might have a conversation with the student.
- The Success Coach, so that he or she might be made aware in case future guidance is sought. The Success Coach could also lend advice to the Learning Support faculty member or the occupational program faculty member.
- The tutors in the Learning Support lab so they might be prepared for that student to seek them out for additional tutoring in a particular class. It would also serve as a conduit between faculty who are aware of specific challenges the student might be having with a particular subject, and the tutors who aid the student with their expertise.
- The student would also receive the communication to ensure him or her that there is awareness by the MGTC family of the challenges and that there are many avenues of support.