CUNY Start:

A Strong Start in College for Those with Greatest Need

Association of Community College Trustees
2014 Leadership Congress
Chicago, IL

Presentation Outline

1. Why CUNY Start?

2. CUNY Start Organization

3. CUNY Program Structure

4. CUNY Start Evaluation

5. CUNY Start Expansion and Updates

Why CUNY Start and Program History

BARRIERS TO STUDENT SUCCESS

- Students arrive at college poorly prepared
  - 79% of CUNY community college students enter with developmental needs

- Educational pursuits are often competing with work, domestic responsibilities, and personal issues
  - 65% of CUNY community college students reenroll after one year

- Colleges are large with many departments, majors, and confusing procedures
  - 16% of CUNY community college students graduate within three years

Source: CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, 2013

CUNY Start Theory of Action

- Eliminate or minimize required remedial need **before** matriculation

- Build academic readiness for college-level work through intensive, semester-long academic experience

- Offer a structured curriculum led by highly trained teachers and advisors will build

- Foster confidence and personal resiliency through positive classroom experience, cohort model, and robust advisement support

Once in their degree programs, students will persist and move towards graduation in timely manner

Robert Stolarik for *The New York Times*

Who CUNY Start Targets

- Students with significant developmental needs (reading, writing and math)

- Full-time Program Entering Needs (Fall 2009-Fall 2013):
    - 69% of students with three developmental needs
    - 31% of students with two developmental needs
    - 99% of students required remediation in math
    - 93% required remediation in writing
    - 75% required remediation in reading

Source: CUNY Office of Research, Evaluation & Program Support

CUNY Start Students & CUNY Associate Degree Students: Fall 2009-Spring 2012

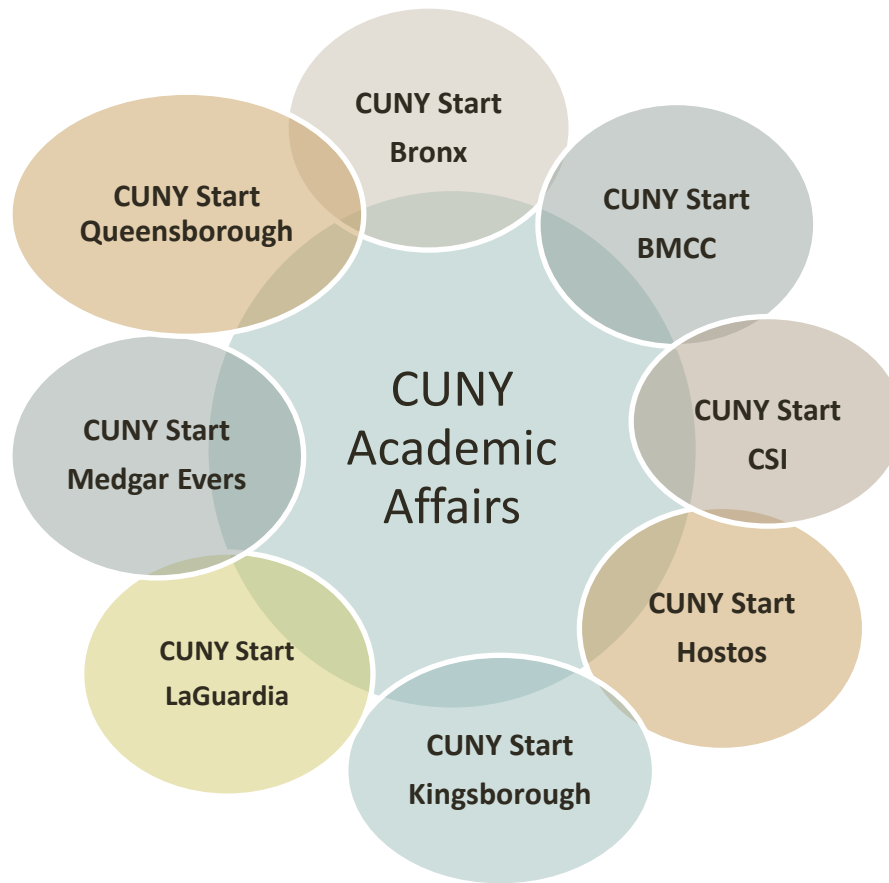|		CUNY Start Students	CUNY Associate Degree Students in Need of Remediation
Total	N	1,716	59,028
College			
BMCC	%	24.0	26.1
Bronx	%	5.1	12.9
College of Staten Island	%	5.6	6.2
Hostos	%	20.6	8.4
Kingsborough	%	12.9	16.5
LaGuardia	%	26.7	15.5
Queensborough	%	5.1	14.5
Gender			
Female	%	55.5	54.9
Male	%	44.5	45.1
Race			
American Indian/Native Alaskan	%	0.6	0.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	%	11.0	13.2
Black	%	32.0	30.3
Hispanic	%	45.2	40.3
White	%	11.2	15.7
Age Group			
20 and Younger	%	42.4	61.4
21 to 25	%	29.4	25.1
26 and Older	%	28.2	13.5
Mean Age	Mean	24.7	21.6
NYC Public High School Graduate	%	34.2	49.2
Received a GED	%	34.3	11.9

CUNY Start History and Organization

CUNY Start History

- 2009: Began as intervention for GED recipients at LaGuardia and Kingsborough:
  - Only 12% of GED recipients who enter CUNY associate programs earn a degree or certificate within four years
  - Intended to help students eliminate some remedial need

- 2010-13: Success rates led to broad expansion:
  - Borough of Manhattan, Bronx, College of Staten Island, Hostos, Medgar Evers, and Queensborough
  - Inclusion of high school graduates with significant developmental needs

- 2014/15: Projected enrollment: 3,800 students

- Total students served to date: 8,424 students

CUNY Start Organization

- CUNY Start operates as a consortium project

- CUNY Office of Academic Affairs:
  - Overall project administration, ongoing training and professional development for teachers and advisors, curriculum development, research and evaluation, citywide outreach and marketing, fundraising to build capacity

  - Colleges:
    - Local project management, direct instruction and advisement services, recruitment of students, matriculation support, cross-campus relations

CUNY START ORGANIZATION

CUNY Start Bronx

CUNY Start BMCC

CUNY Start Queensborough

CUNY Academic Affairs

CUNY Start CSI

CUNY Start Medgar Evers

CUNY Start Hostos

CUNY Start LaGuardia

CUNY Start Kingsborough

CUNY Start Components

What CUNY Start Offers

- Students delay matriculation for one semester

- 15-18 week program with two opportunities to retake CUNY Assessment Tests or exit exam

- $75 student fee covers all costs; no financial aid drawdown
  - Program is funded through NYS continuing education FTE reimbursements

- Intensive study with two schedule options:
  1. *Full-time Program*: 25 hours/week (Reading/Writing **and** Math)
  2. *Afternoon/PM Program*: 12 hours/week (Reading/Writing **or** Math)

CUNY Start Program Model

- Modeled on the CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP)

- Intensive instruction in reading, writing and math

- Integrated supports:
  - In-class tutors
  - Weekly college success seminar
  - Individual advisement to support program success and matriculation

- Curriculum designed by master teachers/curriculum developers from CUNY Adult/Continuing Education

- Specific pedagogy that builds conceptual understanding and makes student an active learner

Pedagogy: Reading and Writing

- Cognitive apprenticeship approach (Collins, Brown, and Newman, 1987)

- Processes of successful readers and writers are modeled and "scaffolded" by instructors (I.e.: "Think alouds")

- Emphasizes "student talk" over "teacher talk," with opportunities for students to practice and refine their reading and writing skills

- Individual, small group, and peer-peer in-class activities

- Extensive feedback on writing from teachers and peers

- Students build reading and writing stamina and confidence throughout semester

Pedagogy: Math

- No lecture-based instruction: Use discovery-based activities and skillful questioning

- Students are expected to explain and assess mathematical ideas and answers (their own and others)

- Students work in small groups, pairs and individually with support from in-class tutors

- Focus is on depth vs. breadth and on conceptual understanding vs. procedures and rules

- Goal is to help students develop "the language and thinking of mathematicians"
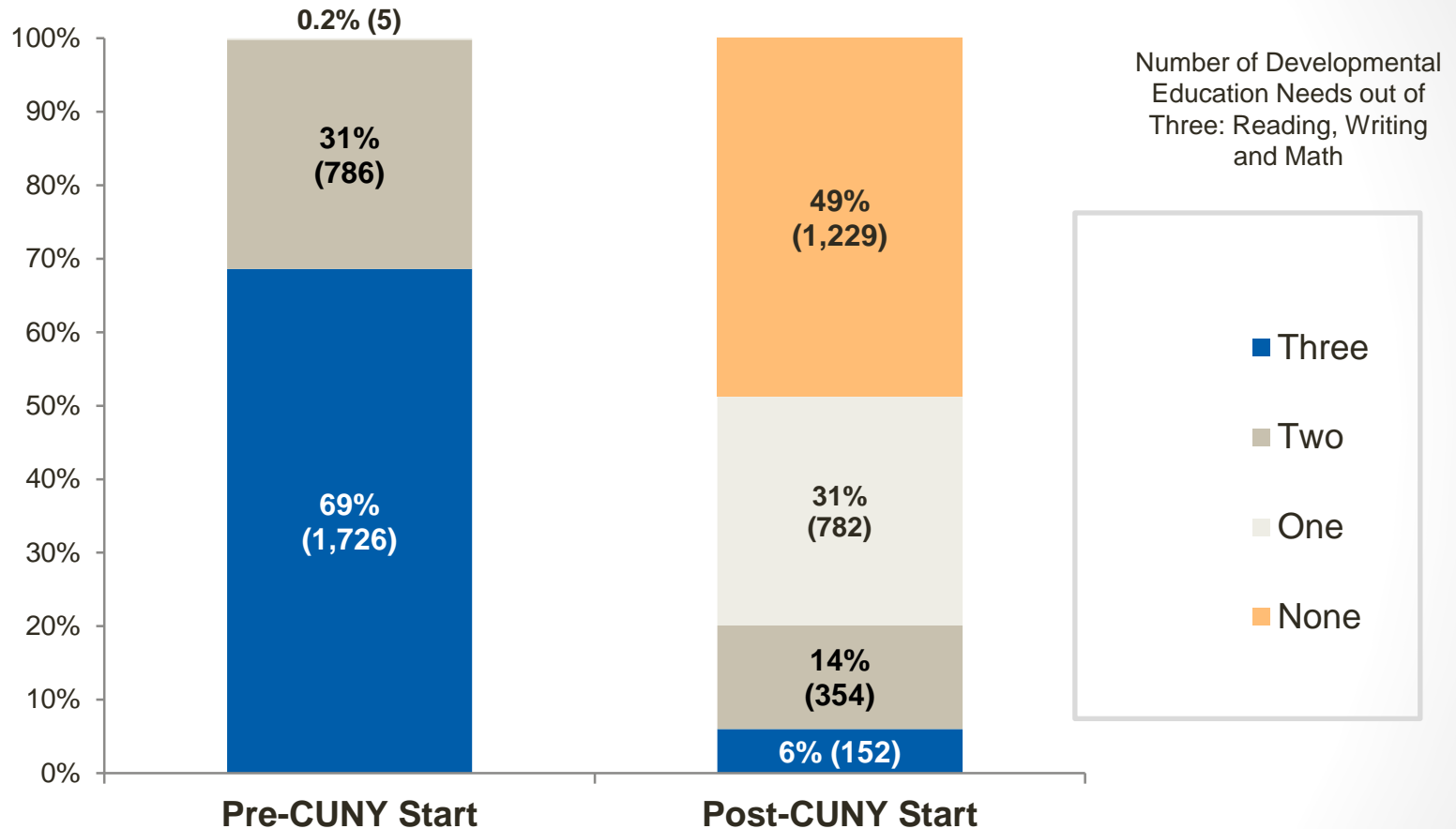
Teacher/Advisor Training and Professional Development

- Mandatory semester-long apprenticeship for all new teachers and advisors

- Initial training by professional/curriculum development coordinators

- Embedded in the classroom of lead teacher or advisor at a campus to learn curriculum and practice pedagogical approach

- Ongoing coaching by professional development coordinators and regular meetings with assigned lead teacher/advisor

- Evaluated at end of semester for readiness to lead own class or advisement caseload

CUNY Start Evaluation

Number of Developmental Education Needs
Before and After CUNY Start
Fall 2009 through Fall 2013 Full-time Cohorts

Number of Developmental Education Needs out of Three: Reading, Writing and Math

Legend:
- ■ Three
- ■ Two
- ■ One
- ■ None

Pre-CUNY Start:
- 0.2% (5)
- 31% (786)
- 69% (1,726)

Post-CUNY Start:
- 49% (1,229)
- 31% (782)
- 14% (354)
- 6% (152)

Source: Office of Research, Evaluation and Program Support

Basic Skills Proficiency Gains by Skills Area
(Fall 2009-Fall 2013

Full-time Program (N=2,517)			
Subject Area	**Students Initially Requiring Remediation**	**Students Gaining Proficiency after Completing CUNY Start**	
	N	N	%
Reading	1,890	1,310	69
Writing	2,351	1,711	73
Math 1 (Pre-Algebra)	1,850	1,298	70
Math 2 (Algebra)	2,494	1,814	73
Math (Overall)	2,514	1,788	71

CUNY Start 2013 Study

- Quasi-experimental analyses of program outcomes using student-level data from the CUNY Institutional Research Database (IRDB)

- Conducted by the CUNY Office of Research, Evaluation and Program Support (REPS) 2012/13

- Constructed comparison group methodology (Propensity Score Matching)

Key Findings

1. *After one semester, CUNY Start students were more likely to achieve proficiency in reading, writing, and math, in comparison to a similar group of students who did not enroll in the program.*

2. *CUNY Start students also achieved more skill area proficiencies after one semester in the program than comparison group students after one semester in a college degree program.*

3. *Once CUNY Start students began a degree program, they attempted and earned more credits than comparison group students after one semester with higher GPAs and are retained at higher rates over time.*

Subject Area Proficiency Gains: CUNY Start Students vs. Matched Comparison Group

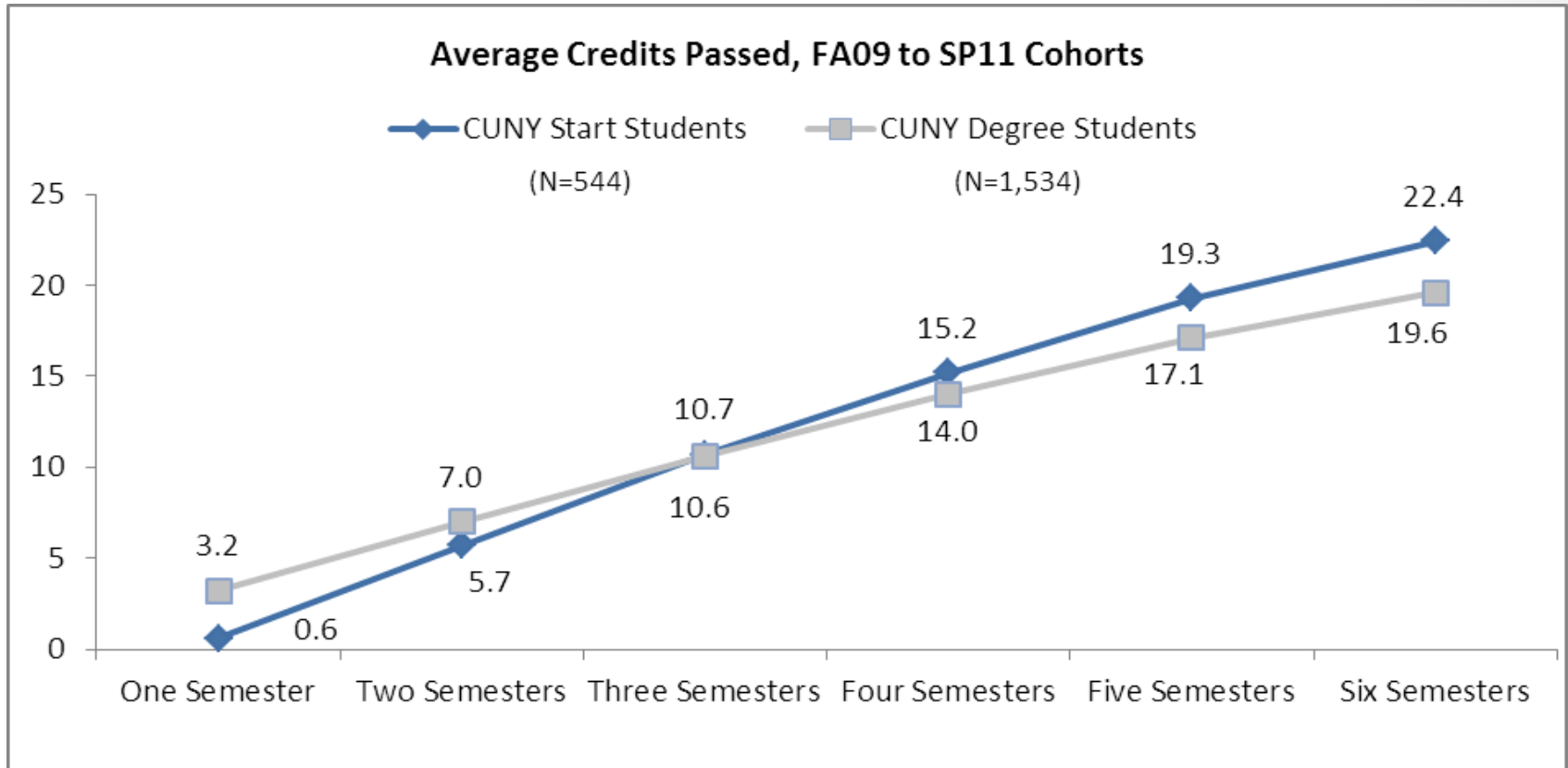|	CUNY Start Students		Matched Comparison Group		
Proficiency Gains in Reading	**N**	**% Gaining Proficiency in CUNY Start**	**N**	**% Gaining Proficiency after One Semester**	
All Students Needing Remediation in Reading	634	55.0	634	30.3	-24.8
Initial Need in Reading + Writing Only	42	66.7	42	50.0	-16.7
Initial Need in Reading + Math Only	45	62.2	45	40.0	-22.2
Initial Need in Reading + Writing + Math	545	53.4	545	27.9	-25.5
Proficiency Gains in Writing					
All Students Needing Remediation in Writing	923	61.9	923	24.8	-37.1
Initial Need in Writing + Reading Only	42	61.9	42	21.4	-40.5
Initial Need in Writing + Math Only	302	73.8	302	38.7	-35.1
Initial Need in Writing + Reading + Math	545	55.2	545	16.5	-38.7
Proficiency Gains in Math					
All Students Needing Remediation in Math	985	53.7	985	11.6	-42.1
Initial Need in Math + Reading Only	71	52.1	71	21.1	-31.0
Initial Need in Math + Writing Only	324	61.7	324	17.3	-44.4
Initial Need in Math + Reading + Writing	474	47.0	474	5.9	-41.1

Source: Office of Research, Evaluation and Program Support

Total Number of Skills Area Proficiencies Gained: By Initial Remedial Need

		Gained Proficiency in ALL Areas	Gained Proficiency in Two Areas	Gained Proficiency in One Area	Gained Proficiency in No Areas
CUNY Start	N	%	%	%	%
Initial Remedial Need in All Areas	595	21.5	26.6	19.8	32.1
Initial Remedial Need in Two Areas	496		35.3	39.1	25.6
Initial Remedial Need in One Area	153			60.1	39.9
Matched Comparison Group after One Semester	N	%	%	%	%
Initial Remedial Need in All Areas	595	0.8	8.6	32.3	58.3
Initial Remedial Need in Two Areas	496		1.6	19.8	78.6
Initial Remedial Need in One Area	153			10.5	89.5
Matched Comparison Group after Two Semesters	N	%	%	%	%
Initial Remedial Need in All Areas	198	17.7	17.7	29.3	35.4
Initial Remedial Need in Two Areas	261		33.3	29.9	36.8
Initial Remedial Need in One Area	84			60.7	39.3

Credits Earned Over Time by CUNY Start and Comparison Group Students

Average Credits Passed, FA09 to SP11 Cohorts

CUNY Start Students (N=544) ◆
CUNY Degree Students (N=1,534) ◻

	One Semester	Two Semesters	Three Semesters	Four Semesters	Five Semesters	Six Semesters
CUNY Start Students	0.6	5.7	10.6	15.2	19.3	22.4
CUNY Degree Students	3.2	7.0	10.7	14.0	17.1	19.6

Although CUNY Start students matriculate one semester later than comparison group students, they catch up and exceed credits earned within a few semesters.

CUNY Start Expansion and Updates

CUNY Start Expansion

- Since inception, the program has experienced enormous growth:
  - 2009/10: 141 students
  - 2010/11: 403 students
  - 2011/12: 1,172 students
  - 2012/13: 1,610 students
  - 2013/14: 3,198 students
  - 2014/15 (projected): 3,800 students

Scale and Funding

- Total CUNY Development Students (Donna: combine Fall & spring new students for total #, and then do % need any developmental, % who need 1, % who need two, and % who need 3 dev ed classes
- Total GED/ HS equivalency students (Donna: please combine Fall & spring new students)
- Percent of Dev Ed in CUNY Start at next level (ie, the scale)
- Funding loss and how CUNY manages it (ie, % who do not pass in CUNY Start and therefore never enroll in college)
- Cost per student including all costs (colleges' & central office admin + faculty + training)

CUNY Start Updates

- Subject of federally funded Institute of Education Studies (IES) 5-year research study launching Spring 2015:
  - 3800 students at four colleges
  - BMCC, Kingsborough, LaGuardia, and Queensborough
  - Led by MDRC and the Community College Research Center (CCRC)

- Piloting condensed summer math model with funding from the Petrie Foundation (Results forthcoming)

www.cuny.edu/cunystart