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## Introduction

More and more students are entering college in the United States without the academic literacy skills needed to successfully complete their college education. In 2007–2008, approximately one-third of all first-year college students were required to enroll in remedial or developmental courses in four-year institutions (Bettinger & Long, 2009), and 41 percent in two-year institutions (Sladky, 2010), despite the fact that four out of five remedial students had a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher (Sladky, 2010). (Even more alarming are the findings of The American Association of College and Universities [AAC&U] who report that 53 percent of first-year college students are academically underprepared, i.e., lacking basic skills in reading, writing, and/or mathematics [Tritelli, 2003]). Though these staggering percentages represent a diverse group of students with a wide array of abilities, educational backgrounds, family income, and life experiences (Dzubak, 2007), the fact remains that an increasing number of students are underprepared for college and therefore are at-risk for failure as college students.

According to King (2004) “at-risk” students in college include those students who are academically underprepared because of educational risk factors, including academic failure, poor preparation, and low expectations; familial risk factors, including values concerning education and lack of financial resources; and social risk factors, including conflicting ethnic or cultural values or stressful peer and social interactions. Keeling (2003) adds one additional risk factor to King’s list: at-risk students enter college lacking educational planning skills or the know-how and steps it takes to earn a college degree. In order to address the many needs of these at-risk students, institutions of higher learning throughout the United States have increasingly been implementing remedial or developmental programs, focusing on reading, writing, and mathematics (Bettinger & Long, 2009). However, for some of these at-risk students, also called developmental students, even the developmental courses are not enough to keep students in college.

One particular group of at-risk developmental students entering both two- and four-year undergraduate programs in large numbers and, unfortunately, dropping out or failing out in large numbers as well, are immigrant students, who tend to need more than one or two remedial courses to be successful in their quest for higher education, despite the fact that they have graduated from U.S. high schools. Developmental immigrant students are a growing phenomenon in the United States, a growing population in higher education, and a growing presence in undergraduate classes, and like their mainstream developmental counterparts, they are academically underprepared for the rigors of college. However, unlike their mainstream developmental counterparts, their linguistic cleavages, especially in writing, and the discrepancies between their expectations and the reality of the college experience and beyond, have created major obstacles to their obtaining academic success.

Furthermore, because this particular population of students, whom we refer to as developmental immigrant students (DI students), has not been the focus of remediation research in higher education, they are usually placed into mainstream classes or developmental classes or ESL classes, which treat these students as *only* mainstream, or *only* developmental or *only* ESL learners, depending on the specialized training of the instructor. The reality for most DI students, however, is that they are all three types: they are developmental students, from (mostly) non-English speaking backgrounds, who have, for the most part, been in mainstream classes in the United States. The reality for college instructors is that this population of students needs to be discussed because their growing numbers indicate that a discussion is warranted: English language learners, including DI students, will comprise approximately 65 percent of the U.S. population growth through the year 2020 (Spanier, 2004).

Our rationale for writing the book is four-fold. First, we wanted to respond to the need for a comprehensive approach in teaching DI students in undergraduate programs. Up until now, most of the literature on teaching English language learners has focused on traditional ESL students or on Generation 1.5 students, paying particular attention to challenges with writing and reading. This book provides a comprehensive framework for DI students, focusing on multiple academic literacy challenges, to help them overcome the obstacles they encounter in college.

The second reason for writing this book is that even though many students coming to our campus (Penn State Brandywine) are underprepared for the rigors of college, DI students, in particular, seem to be less prepared for college than many students as few of their academic literacy skills are well developed for higher education (Allison, 2009). One reason for this underpreparedness is that DI students are still developing their cognitive academic language proficiency: it usually takes 5–7 years to develop CALP (Cummins, 1979). In addition, it seems that the increased standardized testing in public schools has changed the nature of the classroom, encouraging fewer critical thinking tasks (mostly true-false, multiple choice, matching, and sentence completion worksheets and tests); less connected and cohesive reading assignments; and little

academic Internet use (Allison, 2009). The extent to which DI students can manipulate and navigate literacy greatly impacts how successful their post secondary academic efforts will be (Hirvela, 2004).

The third reason for writing this book is to fill a void: teachers who have these at-risk DI students in their classes are not sure how to teach them, and most of the textbooks on immigrant students focus only on writing or only on reading or are edited collections of essays or case studies. None focus on the comprehensive needs of these students. Tinto (2004), Boylan (2001), and McGillin (2003) have shown that the success rate for academically underprepared students, including DI students, can increase by offering a developmental program that provides effective advising (a key component for academic, social and personal success); content and structure (pre-college basic skills courses, tutoring, and topical workshops); and instructors and tutors who believe that students can succeed, despite the sometimes improbable circumstances. We have created such a program, and most of our DI students have become successful college students.

Finally, the fourth reason for writing this book is to share our joy in teaching DI students: we have derived so much pleasure in watching the students grow, both bilingually and bi-culturally, that we wanted to share our lessons, both literally and figuratively, with those faculty who are, or who will be, fortunate enough to teach them. In fact, our students' (unedited) voices are *heard* throughout the book to remind us never to lose sight of why we are teaching them.

This book is divided into three parts, and each chapter begins with the key points highlighted in the chapter. Part I, Developmental Immigrant Students and Academic Literacy (Chapters 1–2), details the challenges faced by DI students and the faculty that teach them and describes some programming options. Part II, Partnering with Campus Support Programs (Chapters 3–4), discusses using a collaborative approach, partnering with learning and writing centers, and/or advising staff and appropriate administrators, in order to maximize DI student benefits in higher education. Part III, Teaching Literacy within an Academic Framework: Suggested Approaches (Chapters 5–9), provides specific approaches that we have found particularly beneficial in teaching DI students. Each chapter identifies specific goals to address problematic issues for the DI students (issues that were not being met in just mainstream, developmental, or ESL courses). The suggested approaches to meet each goal are intentionally specific to provide teachers across the disciplines with concrete activities and methods that can be implemented and built upon in their own classrooms. It is our hope that instructors who have DI students in their classes use these goals and approaches as a menu of ideas to help meet their students' needs, to create their own materials, and to add to their teaching repertoire. The book concludes with several appendixes containing additional classroom resources.

Thus, we offer this resource book to all of the stakeholders involved in the undergraduate education of DI students.

Teaching Developmental Immigrant Students in Undergraduate Programs:  
A Practical Guide  
Myra M. Goldschmidt and Debbie Lamb Ousey  
<http://www.press.umich.edu/titleDetailDesc.do?id=1793856>  
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