



## Case Study

# Improving Course Placement

**East Los Angeles College**  
**Los Angeles, California**

**Target Students:** Entering College Students

**Pilot Duration:** 10 days

**Implementation Model:** Lab Class

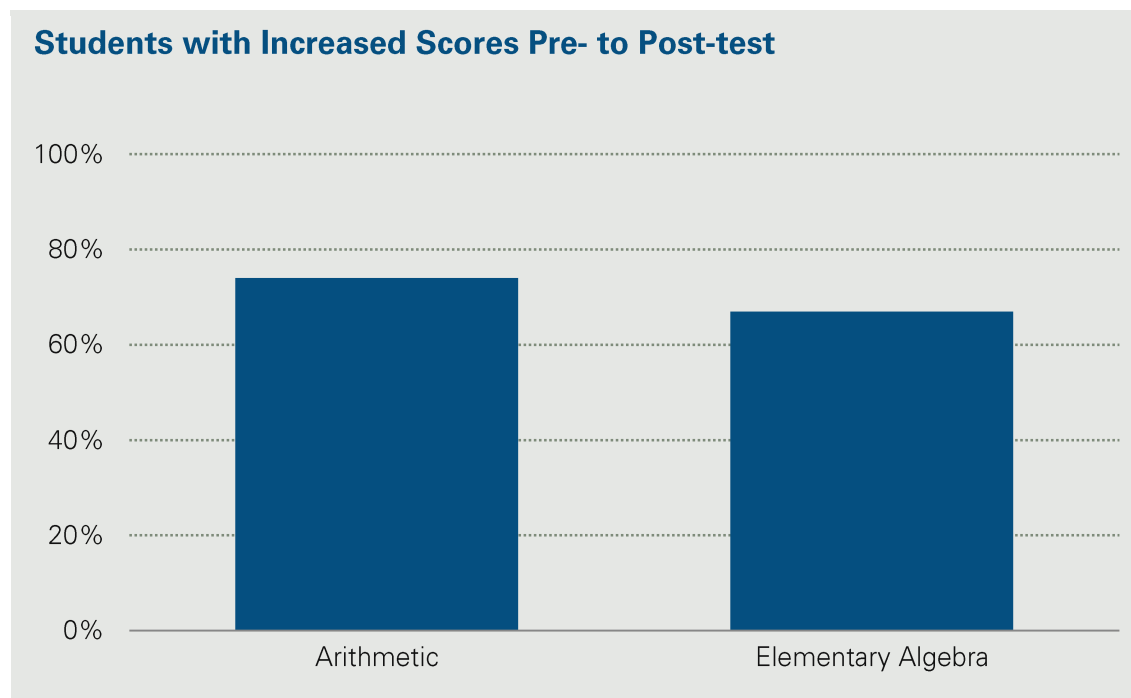
## Executive Summary

East Los Angeles College used ACCUPLACER®//MyFoundationsLab® as a key resource during a summer boot camp and produced impressive gains in both test scores and course placement in just 10 days of instruction. As a result of their study, 38.4% of students gained one or more levels in course placement.

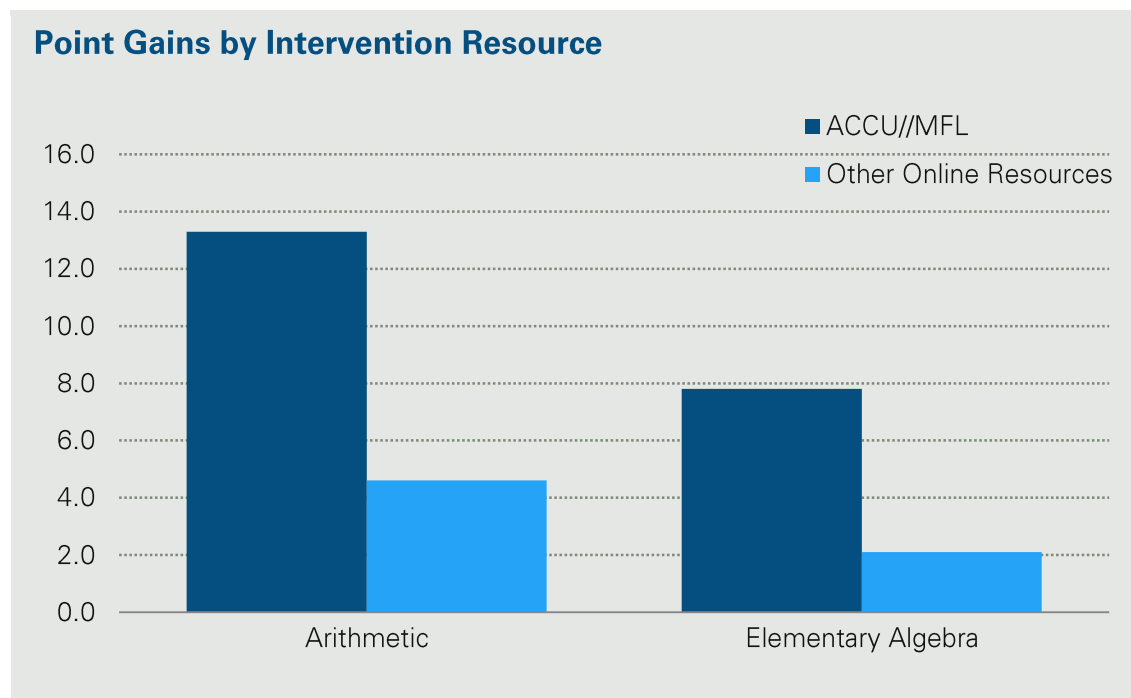
## Implementation Details

As part of its five-week STEM Summer Bridge Program in 2012, East Los Angeles College used instructional courseware as a key component of the program. At the start of the program, students were tested using ACCUPLACER Arithmetic and Elementary Algebra tests to determine their initial placement within East College's math curriculum. The first two weeks of instruction focused on mathematics with the remaining time devoted to science, technology, and engineering. Some students were selected to utilize ACCUPLACER//MyFoundationsLab, while others were assigned another form of online learning. The ACCUPLACER//MyFoundationsLab students were tested with ACCUPLACER diagnostics, and then used ACCUPLACER//MyFoundationsLab an hour each afternoon for 10 days. At the conclusion of the summer program, 57 students had completed the entire intervention and were posttested to determine test score gains and their current placement. Among all students, 74% had higher Arithmetic scores while 67% had higher Elementary Algebra scores. Of 39 students using ACCUPLACER//MyFoundationsLab, 15 (38.4%) increased their course placement by one or two levels with five moving from developmental-

to credit-level math courses. Of the 18 students using other online learning tools, none changed course levels.



Study with ACCUPLACER//MyFoundationsLab produced impressive score gains for the overwhelming majority of students.



ACCUPLACER//MyFoundationsLab produced stronger score gains than other online resources.

*“Not only that it has positive impact on student interest in STEM field, but it also plays a significant role in reviewing the math concepts. There seems to be a shift in [the] students’ view about the dreaded application problems (word problems). In the last few entries of their journals, students write that they have more confidence in their ability to formulate, generalize, and solve problems mathematically.”*

— Anne Siswanto, Professor of Mathematics, East Los Angeles College

## Lessons Learned

- Use of instructional resources and strategies aligned to the domains measured by ACCUPLACER can produce a significant improvement in student placement.
- Even short-term interventions produce measurable gains in student achievement.

## Implementation Model

### Lab Class

This instructional model allows students to work on their own on the ACCUPLACER//MyFoundationsLab online intervention curricula while receiving ongoing guidance and monitoring from a teacher/instructor. Access to technology is provided on a regular basis as part of a scheduled class or a required lab outside of class.

## Measure of Success

### Improvement in Placement Level

Pilot program sites were able to identify the percentage of students who improved their course placement and the number of courses bypassed by comparing students’ placement levels from pre- to post-assessment. Pilots used the ACCUPLACER placement test as the pre- and post-assessment measure.

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## Implementation Model

- Independent Study
- Independent Study with Guidance
- Lab Class
- Blended Instruction

## Measure of Success

- Improvement in Scores
- Improvement in Placement Levels
- Improvement in Proficiency Levels
- Performance in Subsequent Courses

## Location

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- Online