

## Tips for talking to students about DSP:

- ▶ Make it clear that all CSUSB FY writing classes are college level.
- ▶ Avoid language that smacks of references to remediation or otherwise suggests deficit models of literacy. (Words like *skills*, *needs*, and *improvement* can be replaced with words like *abilities*, *interests*, and *growth*, for instance.)
- ▶ Let students know that the EPT is not the most useful instrument for placement purposes. Students can factor their EPT score into their decision, if they wish (and the DSP website offers one way of thinking about this), but it should not replace their own assessment of their experiences and interests as readers, writers, and learners.
- ▶ Encourage students to do self-placement thoughtfully and to base their selections on what will best support their best interests as writers, readers, and learners.
- ▶ For those just out of high school, encourage them to see their self-placement as an act of self-efficacy, one of the many, many times in college they will be called upon to act self-responsibly as an adult.

## What if a student is still uncertain?

- ▶ Ask why the student is uncertain. Is the uncertainty about him- or herself as a writer? OR about institutional concerns (the lack of units for 102; a perception that a longer sequence = remedial; a misguided belief that taking 107 and retaking it if necessary would be an equivalent experience to stretch composition)?
- ▶ Address institutional concerns with data about success rates, information about financial aid, and information the stretch program, etc. Offer reasons why the student's learning and literacy interests should trump all other concerns in their decision process.
- ▶ Address other uncertainties by asking questions about the student's writing, reading, and learning experiences. Have the student describe these aloud. Use the DSP website and the advising handouts to help you frame questions and discuss course sequence features.
- ▶ Look together at course sequences and discuss their features in relation to the student's self-perceptions. Ask the student what seems most useful and supportive to his or her learning style and growth as a writer, reader, and analytic thinker.
- ▶ If a student asks what option to take, avoid overtly telling him/her what to do. Ask what advice the student would give you if roles were reversed. Or, talk the student through the way you would REASON about the choice, rather than saying, "Do this."
- ▶ Ultimately, leave the decision in the student's hands. The student has the right to make his or her own choice, even if it is not the one you hope the student will make.
- ▶ If you feel you MUST say something about the choice, suggest to the student that s/he sign up for the course in fall, so that s/he will have more time to try a different sequence if the first choice isn't a good fit, after all.