Get with the Program: Accelerating CC Students’ Entry into and Completion of Programs of Study

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Need to Help Students “Get with the Program”

- CCs designed for access, not completion
- To earn a credential, students must first enter a coherent college-level program of study
- Many community college students enter without clear goals for college and careers
- CCs offer lots of programs, but little guidance to help students choose and enter a program
- Research on K-12 education demonstrates power of “instructional program coherence”
Outcomes for Program Concentrators

Five-Year Highest Outcomes: Concentrators Compared to the Full Cohort and Non-Concentrators

- Entered Academic Transfer Program
- Entered CTE Program
- Attempted 9 Credits, but Did Not Enter Program of Study

Legend:
- 30 Credits in Year 5
- Transfer with no Award
- Transfer with Award
- AA without Transfer
- Certificate
Importance of Getting with a Program *Early*

Concentrators: Five-Year Outcomes by Term Entered Concentration

- 30 Credits in Year 5
- Transfer with no Award
- Transfer with Award
- AA without Transfer
- Certificate
Gatekeeper Course Barriers

Attempted Versus Entered Concentration in 5 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attempted 9 or more college credits</th>
<th>Completed 9 or more college credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attempted</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entered</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>60%</td>
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</tbody>
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ATTEMPTED 9 or more college credits in at least 1 program of study within five years (in ONE CTE program or AMONG three academic programs)

COMPLETED 9 or more college credits in at least 1 program of study within five years (in ONE CTE program or AMONG three academic programs)
Concentrators by Program Type

Concentrators: Liberal Arts and Sciences vs. CTE

66% Liberal Arts and Sciences
34% CTE
Success Rates by Program Area

Liberal Arts Concentrators: 5-Year Outcomes by Field

- 30 Credits in Year 5
- Transfer with no Award
- Transfer with Award
- AA without Transfer
- Certificate

Art/Hum/English
Math/Sci
Soc/Behav
Success Rates by Program Area

CTE Concentrators: 5-Year Outcomes by Program Area

- 30 Credits in Year 5
- Transfer with no Award
- Transfer with Award
- AA without Transfer
- Certificate
Rethinking CC Practices to Accelerate Program Entry and Completion

**CONNECTION**
From interest to enrollment

- How can we increase the number of entering students who are motivated and prepared to choose a college-level program of study?

**ENTRY**
From enrollment to entry into program of study

- How can we accelerate rate at which new students choose and successfully enter a program?

**PROGRESS**
From program entry to 75% of program requirements completed

- How can we accelerate rates at which program concentrators complete program requirements?

**COMPLETION**
From program completion to credential of value for further education and (for CTE) labor market advancement

- How can we ensure that our programs prepare students for further education and (for CTE programs) for career advancement?
Principles of Effective Practice
Supported by Research

• Student engagement
• Instructional program coherence
• Structured programs
• Contextualized instruction
• Acceleration
• Integrated student supports

Note: These principles examined in Community College Research Center’s new Assessment of Evidence series, available at: http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?uid=845.
Empower Faculty and Staff to Design/Implement Innovations at Scale

**CONNECTION**
From interest to enrollment

- College readiness prep for hs students
- Early testing
- Strategic dual enrollment
- “Bridges” from ABE to college
- Recruitment materials with program streams clearly mapped out

**ENTRY**
From enrollment to entry into program of study

- Program offerings / requirements clearly mapped out
- Consistent messages to new students
- Prescribed course sequence with required 3-credit college success course
- Dev ed contextualized to program streams

**PROGRESS**
From program entry to 75% of program requirements completed

- Course learning outcomes/assessments tied to program outcomes
- Students required to declare major
- Students required to keep up-to-date program completion plan

**COMPLETION**
From program completion to credential of value for further education and (for CTE) labor market advancement

- Revamped program review process to ensure that programs prepare for further education and career advancement
- Transfer agreements with universities that ensure junior standing
- Regular review of program learning outcomes by employers
- Survey of recent grads for suggestion of way to improve programs
Practices of High-Performance Organizations

- Strong leadership focused on outcomes
- Customer focus
- Functional alignment
- Process improvement
- Use of measurement for improvement
- Employee involvement
- Training and professional development
- External linkages
A Continuous Improvement Process for CCs

Leadership Focused on Outcomes

Faculty/Staff Involvement

Targeted Faculty/Staff Training, Prof Development

Process Measurement, Alignment, Improvement

Set learning outcomes/completion goals

Measure student learning/progression

Identify learning/achievement gaps

Align practices/policies to improve outcomes

Evaluate and improve alignment efforts

External Linkages

Employers
Universities
K-12 Schools
Adult Basic Skills
Non-credit Workforce Programs
Community Groups

IMPROVED STUDENT LEARNING/COMPLETION
Steps to Redesigning CCs for Completion

1) Engage faculty and staff to examine practices at key stages of students’ experience with the college

2) Redesign and align practices at scale, applying principles of effective practice, to increase rates at which students enter and then complete programs

3) Evaluate changes by comparing college’s past rates of program entry and, by program, rates of completion among concentrators

4) Repeat these steps, rethinking professional development practices, committee structure budgeting and incentives to institutionalize the process
Tips for Using State Data To Promote College Redesign

- Track beginning cohorts longitudinally and report achievement of intermediate and “completion” milestones as well as “on-track” indicators
- Track student progress into/thru programs of study
- Disaggregate cohort results by level of readiness, age, enrollment status, race/ethnicity and gender
- Share college-by-college student progression and success rate data with all colleges
- Provide TA to colleges on rethinking their practices to improve completion rates
For more information:

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