CAN WE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE COMPLETION RATES?

THE COMPLETION BY DESIGN APPROACH

2012 AACC Convention
April 2012
Orlando, Florida
Goal of Completion by Design:

Raise completion rates for most students while containing costs, maintaining open access and ensuring the quality of college programs and credentials.
Managing Partners

GUILFORD TECHNICAL COMM. COLLEGE

MIAMI DADE COLLEGE

LONE STAR COLLEGE SYSTEM

SINCLAIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE
# Cadres & State Policy Leads

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**STATE POLICY LEAD**

- Florida College System / Department of Education
- North Carolina Community College System
- Ohio Association of Community Colleges
- Educate Texas
REDESIGNING CC PROGRAM PATHWAYS FOR COMPLETION: PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS

Davis Jenkins
Community College Research Center
Loss-Momentum Framework

**CONNECTION**
From interest to enrollment

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

**PROGRESS**
From program entry to completion of program requirements

**COMPLETION**
Completion of credential of value for further education and (for CTE) labor market advancement
Program Pathway

**CONNECTION**
From interest to enrollment

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**COMPLETION**
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Consider College Education

Enter Program of Study

Complete Program of Study
Status Quo Pathway Design (example AA in LAS or Gen Studies)

- AA requirements not aligned with requirements for junior standing in a major at transfer institutions
- Lack of clear pathways to transfer in a major for cc students; too many choices
- Students progress toward AA and transfer not tracked; little on-going guidance, support
- No mechanism to inform choice of major pathway
- Dev ed narrowly focused on math and English, not customized to particular paths
Status Quo Pathway Design

Transfer as Junior in Major

Career-Path Employment

Meet with Advisor (1st Term Schedule)

Dev Reading

Dev ENGL

Dev Math

General Ed

ENGL 101

Math 101

Health Prereqs

Nursing

Allied Health

A.A.S.

Certificates

A.A. Electives

Business Electives

A.S. Pre-major

A.A.Electives

Voluntary Orientation

Placement Testing

Strong connection -

Weak connection -

Intake

ABE ESL GED

Completion by Design
Pathway Redesign Principles

1. Accelerate entry into coherent programs of study
2. Minimize time required to get college-ready
3. Ensure students know requirements to succeed
4. Customize and contextualize instruction
5. Integrate student supports with instruction
6. Continually monitor student progress and provide feedback
7. Reward behaviors that contribute to completion
8. Leverage technology to improve learning and program delivery
Pathway Redesign Process

- **Connection**: From interest to enrollment
  - Market program paths
  - Build bridges from high school and adult ed. into program streams (e.g., strategic dual enrollment, I-BEST)

- **Entry**: From enrollment to entry into program of study
  - Help students choose program pathway and track entry
  - Build prescribed “on-ramps” customized to largest program streams

- **Progress**: From program entry to completion of program requirements
  - Clearly define and prescribe program paths
  - Monitor students’ progress and provide feedback and supports JIT
  - Incentivize progress

- **Completion**: Completion of credential of value for further education and (for CTE) labor market advancement
  - Align academic program outcomes with requirements for success in further education and (for CTE programs) in the labor market
Model Pathway Design

- Program learning goals clearly defined and aligned with the requirements transfer with junior standing in major and (for CTE programs) career advancement.
- Program pathways well structured and prescribed, with electives only as needed to achieve learning goals.
- Students’ progress toward meeting requirements is monitored and feedback and support provided “just-in-time”.
- “On-ramps” to help students choose a program of study and customized to accelerate entry into specific program streams.
Model Pathway Design

Transfer as Junior in Major

Career-Path Employment

First-Year Experience

Meet with Advisor (Choose initial program stream; plan full program schedule)

Required Career Interest and Academic Readiness Testing

Required Initial Orientation

Program On-Ramp

Program On-Ramp

Program On-Ramp

Program On-Ramp

Program On-Ramp

Program On-Ramp

A.A.S.

Certificates

Contextualized Basic Skills (e.g. I-BEST)

Strong connection -

Weak connection -
Campus Convocations:

- What are we doing well?
- What can we do better?

Inclusive, College-Wide Planning Process

Campus Teams:
- 120+ faculty, student services staff, and administrators
- Co-led by faculty and administrator
- Charged with analyzing data on student performance and identifying best practices

September 2011 Retreat:
- Campus teams reviewed 2005 student cohort data
- Identified preliminary populations of students to target for further research

December 2011 Retreat:
- Campus teams reviewed substantial IR data on student performance
- Discussed results of student focus groups (200+ students)
- Agreed on key student populations
- Identified common themes and barriers across student populations

Spring 2012:
- 7 subject matter teams explored best practices
- 3 academic teams focused on curricular and pedagogical issues
- 4 support services teams focused on aligning intake, financial aid, assessment, advising and technology with academic programs

February 2012 Retreat:
- Engaged subcommittee team members, campus team leads and academic and student deans
- Discussed best practices
- Explored draft pathways to student success

March 2012:
- Engaged entire college-wide community through campus-based town halls
- Q & A session following each town hall
- Charged disciplines and student service areas to provide feedback to subcommittees on draft pathways

April 2012:
- Integrated feedback from engagement
- Identified required organizational, financial, technological, cultural and policy actions and resources
- Determined implementation priorities and plan
The Pathway: Essential Elements of Success

- Enter Program of Study
- College-level
  - Structured curriculum plans with sequential coursework and focused course choices
  - Increased student engagement related to career interests
  - Transition assistance including transfer & career orientations and career exploration

- Placement testing & remediation in high school
- Pre-placement remediation at MDC
- Modularized, contextualized instruction
- Intensive focus on skill gaps to build forward momentum
- Mastery-based instruction
- Decreased non-college credits
- Integrated instruction/structured program
- Built upon research findings on language acquisition, learning theories and models
- Concurrent enrollment in EAP and college-level coursework

“The Glue:”
Communities of Interest
&
Integrated Student Support System
The VDC $^3$ “Message” has been the Key Driving Force for this Process.

THE POTENTIAL IS

THE RESPONSIBILITY IS

HUGE OURS

This is our opportunity to improve our students’ success and enable completion in ways that no other institution has been able to do.
WHY DOES INNOVATION AT SCALE REQUIRE POLICY ACTION?
THE ROLE OF STATE POLICY IN ACCELERATING THE COMPLETION AGENDA

- Community college policy and funding are largely determined at state level
- State policy can affect and shape priorities of all colleges in a state
- State data can be used to examine full scope of student pathways—within and across institutions and education systems, and into labor market
- States have existing networks of community college leaders and professionals that can promote and accelerate diffusion of innovation
- Building capacity of state agencies to support system redesign across colleges is a low-cost strategy for spreading and sustaining reforms
- Engaging and focusing stakeholders and allies accelerates reform and facilitates implementation
A COMPREHENSIVE STATE-LEVEL APPROACH TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT

- **Strong state policy leadership** focused on outcomes
- **Longitudinal tracking/reporting** of student pathways through education and into labor market
- **Broad engagement** of college professionals in examining data and implementing systemic reforms
- **Mechanisms for sharing innovations** systemwide
- **State-based TA** to colleges on building capacity to improve
- **Policy incentives** for innovation and learning from colleges
- **Feedback loops** to policymakers, agency, colleges
- **TA to state agencies** on change management and applied research
• Ability to engage all colleges in planning CBD change strategies and results
• Ongoing support for accelerated adoption of proven/promising innovations by institutions
• Efficient use of state PD, leadership resources and venues to support college innovation
• Identification and removal of policy barriers to innovation
• Better informed advice to and support for policymakers on policy design, (information and incentives) implementation, consequences
• Completion-focused **policy scans** to provide context for the policy agenda in each state

• **Support for close collaboration** between the college cadres and the state policy lead organization

• Assistance to cadres and state policy lead organizations in developing completion-focused **policy workplans** for their state, with clearly identified priorities and targets aligned with a common policy framework

• Delivery of **state policy and capacity-focused content** for Completion by Design meetings, including in-state and cross-state convenings

• Support for convening of **statewide advisory** board inclusive of public, private, and civic leaders
OVERVIEW: KEY POLICIES FOR COMPLETION BY DESIGN

**CONNECTION**
Interest to Application

- Policies increase student interest in, understanding of options for, and connections to college
- Aligned High School and ABE Exit and College Entrance Standards
- Clearly Defined and Broadly Communicated College-Readiness Standards
- Promotion of Early Assessment, Early Remediation, and Early College Opportunities
- Comprehensive College Outreach

**ENTRY**
Enrollment to Completion of Gatekeeper Courses

- Policies facilitate student enrollment, choice of program, and completion of key momentum milestones
- Coherent Assessment and Placement Policies that are Consistently Applied, including Diagnostics
- Early Connection to Programs of Study
- Strong College Orientation and Advising
- Redesign of Developmental Education

**PROGRESS**
Enter into Course of Study to 75% Requirements Completed

- Policies push students to focus their studies and progress efficiently through academic requirements
- Access to Structured Programs and Pathways
- Early Declaration of Academic Majors
- Accelerated Student Progression
- Strong Retention-focused Advising and Interventions

**COMPLETION**
Complete Course of Study to Credential with Labor Market Value

- Policies ensure more students graduate faster and ready for next step in career or further education
- Development of Plans for Graduation/Degree and Job Placement
- Improved Articulation and Transfer
- Reduced Time to Completion
OVERVIEW:
KEY POLICIES FOR COMPLETION BY DESIGN

- Financial Aid / Affordability
- Data System Capacity and Use
- Continuous Improvement Processes
- Political Leadership and Commitment
- Student Engagement and Support Services
COMMON CADRE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES ACROSS STATES

- Limited number of highly structured program pathways with clearly delineated course requirements and limited electives
- Individualized education plans
- Required early selection of programs
- Electronic student tracking, degree audit, early warning systems
- Improved and required orientation and advising, including career advising
- Improved transfer and articulation
GETTING STATE POLICY TARGETS RIGHT: THREE AREAS OF FOCUS FOR CBD

• “Getting with the Program”: promoting pathways
  – Orientation/intake
  – Assessment/placement
  – Program requirements

• Redesigning basic skills acquisition to minimize developmental ed and contextualize into programs

• Improving the likelihood of transfer and labor market success
NOW’S THE TIME

CBD has a real opportunity to advance a policy agenda and state capacity-building approach that breaks new ground—and enables CBD and non-CBD colleges to dramatically improve completion outcomes.
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