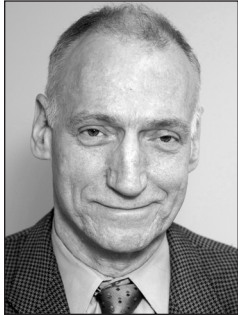


CCRC Currents

COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER

The Growing Prominence of Community Colleges

THOMAS BAILEY



Today's community colleges are increasingly perceived by educators, government officials, and philanthropists as a viable, low-cost means to address fundamental problems in American society. These include poor rates of college degree attainment among

low-income populations and general anxiety about the nation's long-term ability to compete economically on the world stage. Yet the burgeoning enthusiasm that now exists for the role that community colleges might play in improving equity in higher education and in building a nimble, highly educated workforce did not develop overnight.

When the Community College Research Center was founded fourteen years ago, two-year public colleges seemed like all-but-forgotten institutions in the otherwise well regarded U.S. higher education system. Despite the fact that they enrolled nearly half of the nation's undergraduates and played a key role in preparing the country's skilled workforce, very little was known about community colleges. They were rarely mentioned in national discussions on higher education, economic development, or international competitiveness. Journalists and policymakers, who focused much of their attention on highly selective public and private universities, tended to view community colleges with skepticism. Academic researchers had spent many years arguing primarily over whether or not community colleges exacerbated inequality by thwarting baccalaureate ambitions among minority and low-income students, but, overall, research on community colleges accounted for less than 10 percent of the published research on higher education.

Recognizing that this research deficiency made little sense, Jesse Ausubel from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation invited Teachers College, Columbia University, to submit a proposal to form a commu-

nity college research center. Housed at the Institute on Education and the Economy at Teachers College, CCRC was established in 1996. In the years since then, CCRC's research on core community college functions has served both to generate and inform a renewed interest in these essential higher education institutions. This year marks the conclusion of a decade and a half of seed funding from Sloan to create CCRC and to establish its research portfolio. We remain deeply appreciative of the Foundation's commitment to us, and we are delighted that our work continues to make vital contributions to higher education research, policy, and practice. In what follows, we make reference to the rising interest in community colleges while recounting some of the Center's most important work.

CCRC's initial studies focused on understanding the multiple missions of community colleges and in particular their role in workforce preparation and economic development. Some critics argued

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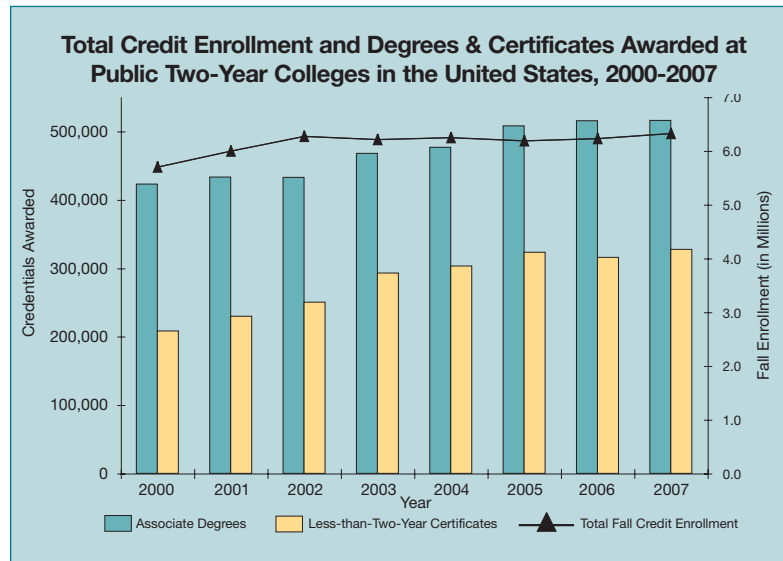
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that the colleges were trying to take on too many roles. We concluded that the activities of community colleges could only be understood in light of their need to generate revenue from the public sector. Many of the functions were efforts to build a political base that would provide support with state legislatures and local governments. Managing multiple missions was in most cases a solvable organizational problem.

At that time, the National Science Foundation’s Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program, which aims to improve the education of the nation’s science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) technicians, was still young. CCRC’s examination of this diverse and decentralized program demonstrated that by promoting collaboration among industry and community colleges, ATE centers can indeed help to develop STEM curriculum that is more responsive to the needs of high-tech employers. But we also found that college programs based on outside funding often had little influence on the regular operations of the colleges. Despite their good works, they generally faded away when funding ended. This insight became an underlying theme in many of our subsequent projects.

In the fall of 2000, CCRC started collecting data for our National Field Study of Community Colleges. Teams of CCRC researchers conducted over 600 interviews with administrators, faculty, and students at fifteen community colleges in New York, Texas, Florida, California, Washington, and Illinois to build institutional case studies for the project. The aim of this enormous undertaking was to sketch out the state of American community colleges in light of such trends as reduced public funding and soaring enrollments. Most of all, we wanted to understand how well community colleges were fulfilling their traditional mandate to open the door to higher education for all students. This was particularly important because of the declining labor market returns to a high school diploma. Completing a certificate or two-year occupational degree in a high demand field, on the other hand, showed solid benefits in the labor market. The research we carried out culminated in the award-winning book, *Defending the Community College Equity Agenda*.

What we found is that while community colleges do well in providing access to a wide variety of students in spite of difficult fiscal and demographic circumstances, many of those same students, especially academically underprepared students, make little progress in actually attaining their educational goals. A majority of entering community college students state that they want to earn at least a bachelor’s degree, yet only 35 percent to 40 percent of them complete a two- or four-year degree or a certificate within six years.



Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System [data files], U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Note: Credentials awarded include those awarded during the academic year ending in the spring of the calendar year shown.

Thus one conclusion that emerged clearly is that colleges must shift their focus from one on enrollments to one on student success, and they must think of such change in terms of broad institutional policy rather than discrete, small-scale programs targeted at limited numbers of students. Even colleges we studied that mounted dozens of specific programs continued to have very low measures of institutional performance, whether those were graduation rates, retention rates, or job placement rates. We concluded that in order to bring about significant improvements in student outcomes, colleges needed to make changes in the fundamental ways that they operated.

It is encouraging that some of the most significant initiatives designed to improve outcomes for community college students that have been launched since we began that research have emphasized the same ideas we called attention to—an increased focus on student outcomes in addition to student access, a commitment to promoting broad

institutional reform, and a skepticism about the lasting impact of very specific programs based on outside funding. Another trend common to these recent major initiatives—again aligned with our own recommendations—has been a growing emphasis on using data and research to diagnose college problems and to help guide the development and implementation of solutions. Indeed, the ten-year, twelve billion dollar plan to increase community college completion rates that President Obama proposed last year—which represents the first serious consideration by the federal government to invest in broad community college improvement—emphasizes data analysis and self-study on the part of colleges and states.

CCRC has been involved in three of the most important foundation-funded reform efforts to date: The Bridges to Opportunity initiative, funded by the Ford Foundation and created in 2002; the Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count initiative, established by Lumina Foundation for Education in 2004 and subsequently funded by Lumina and other funders; and the Postsecondary Success (PS) initiative, launched by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2008. The relatively new and very large PS initiative is particularly ambitious: its goal is to double the number of young people who by age 26 earn a postsecondary degree or certificate that has strong value in the labor market. With support from Gates, CCRC has begun a number of studies that examine promising yet largely untested strategies for increasing student success; these will inform future investments of the initiative (see pp. 7 and 13).

We have also carried out evaluations of Ford Bridges and Achieving the Dream activities and conducted research to maximize learning from these broad, multi-year efforts. The Bridges initiative, which concluded in 2008, was a six-state effort for bringing about changes in state policy to increase the number of low-income adults with postsecondary credentials in high-demand career fields. It served as an incubator for ideas that have since gained currency on how to build broad-based constituencies for change and how to integrate college functions—such as remediation, student services, and occupational and academic education—to make them more amenable to the needs of struggling students.

The goal of the Achieving the Dream initiative, which now includes 98 community colleges and 4 universities in 22 states, is to increase student success rates and to close achievement gaps among

groups that have traditionally faced significant barriers to success, including low-income students and students of color. One of the hallmarks of this effort is its emphasis on using student progression data to continuously align and improve programs and services to support student success (see p. 6).

News about Achieving the Dream is one factor among many that has helped cultivate a growing point of view among institutional and state-level decision makers that the analysis of student tracking data is essential for the purpose of improving college performance. Thirty-one states now operate student databases with at least some participation by colleges—that is more than twice the number that did so when Achieving the Dream first began. CCRC, along with accreditation agencies and others, has also worked to persuade education leaders about the advantage of maintaining longitudinal student data. Indeed we have worked with many of the states that collect the best data—including Florida, Connecticut, Texas, Washington, and Virginia—to chart student progress over time, to identify critical points at which students fail or drop out of their programs, and to estimate the effects of practices aimed at increasing student achievement.

Further reflecting the growth of interest in community colleges, in 2006 CCRC led a team including MDRC and the University of Virginia in a successful proposal to the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to create the National Center for Postsecondary Research (NCPR). It is significant that a proposal for a national center to study higher education that focused primarily on community colleges was successful. NCPR's principal projects, which include experimental studies, measure the effectiveness of programs, such as developmental summer bridge programs and learning communities, that are designed to help students make the transition to college and master basic skills needed to advance to a degree (see p. 5).

As data collection by college systems improves, NCPR and CCRC increasingly make use of large-scale datasets to examine issues in student progression. Using data from Florida and New York City, CCRC completed a pathbreaking study on dual enrollment in 2007. The study's findings suggest that dual enrollment may produce significant benefits for many students, not simply for academically focused high achievers who are already college-bound. CCRC is currently involved in an initiative in California funded by The James Irvine Foundation that supports the development of dual

enrollment programs for strengthening college and career pathways for low-income youth (see p. 11).

Large-scale longitudinal datasets have also been useful in examining one of the most difficult challenges facing community colleges: improving the outcomes of academically underprepared students. Student resistance to conventional remedial programs—which often delay entrance into credit-bearing courses—runs very high. Recent CCRC studies using data from Achieving the Dream and elsewhere reveal that about a third of students who are referred to remediation never actually enroll in a remedial course (see p. 7). Additional research by NCPD and others suggests that students whose college placement exam scores place them on the cusp of being college-ready do as well in college-level courses whether or not they first take remedial courses. This finding has led a growing number of community colleges to “mainstream” students who are not far below college level directly into college-level courses with added supports, thus accelerating their progress toward a credential.

CCRC has also used state data to study innovative programs aimed at adult students with very weak skills. Last year we completed a study on Washington State’s I-BEST program, which pairs basic skills and career-technical instructors in the classroom to help students gain basic and occupational skills simultaneously. The study found that program participants were almost four times as likely as similar non-participants to earn a college-level occupational credential (see p. 9).

I-BEST is only one innovation that is attracting attention to Washington State. In 2007 the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBSTC) launched the Student Achievement Initiative (SAI), which CCRC is now studying (see p. 10). SAI is a system-wide performance funding policy that provides monetary incentives to colleges for increasing student achievement, including the attainment of intermediate milestones (such as passing a college-level math course) that are associated with a higher probability of program completion. SAI is designed not only to encourage more consideration of student outcomes, but to provide colleges with real-time data about where students do and do not make forward progress, so that colleges can better target increasingly scarce resources.

In sharp contrast to what was occurring when CCRC was founded fourteen years ago, community colleges now participate in a variety of improvement efforts that our research findings suggest are

warranted. The most ambitious of these efforts involve the adoption of processes and practices—such as evidence-based management, alignment of college programs and services, and increased coordination with other institutions—that are not easy to implement even in times when budgets are not so sorely constrained as today. Yet, while steep challenges remain, community colleges and their state systems are now engaged in more innovative work than ever before. The Sloan Foundation’s enduring commitment to these institutions has certainly contributed to this state of affairs.

By providing the guidance and support needed to allow CCRC to grow into an essential research organization whose study findings are widely valued, Sloan helped to generate much of the research knowledge that now informs the expanding efforts to improve our nation’s community colleges. Through its sustained efforts, the Sloan Foundation has made a profound contribution to the strength of the educational programs and services provided by these crucial institutions.

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In this newsletter, you will learn about our new and continuing research, upcoming conference presentations, and recent publications. Complete information about CCRC is available on our website, <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu>, where you can also sign up to receive bi-weekly E-Alerts and download most of our reports and briefs. We welcome your feedback.

CCRC RESEARCH

Comprising both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, the research conducted by CCRC is of national importance in promoting adequate preparation, increased access, and educational success for all students. We are currently involved in a dozen projects (many of which are described in the pages that follow) in four core research areas. Although these areas focus on different activities and initiatives, the fundamental goal of each is to support and promote student success. In the first area, we conduct research on and provide

technical assistance to state and national initiatives that assist colleges in undertaking data-informed strategic reform to improve student learning and student outcomes. Second, we investigate workforce education in the context of economic development activities. Third, we study developmental education and practices to improve the success of students with weak academic skills. And fourth, we explore education and career transition pathways, particularly those between the secondary and postsecondary education sectors and those for adults entering or re-entering higher education.

National Center for Postsecondary Research

The National Center for Postsecondary Research (NCPR), led by and housed at CCRC, focuses on measuring the effectiveness of programs designed to help students make the transition to college and master basic skills needed to advance to a degree. While colleges employ multiple programs and policies designed to teach students the skills they need to succeed, there is little definitive research on the effects of some widely-used practices. NCPR employs rigorous research methodologies, including random assignment experimental design, to evaluate such practices. NCPR was established through a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education in 2006, and is operated with partners MDRC, the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, and faculty from Harvard University.

As described below, NCPR is currently carrying out random assignment studies of developmental summer bridge and learning communities programs. Large-scale studies on the effectiveness of remedial programs and on career-focused dual enrollment are also underway. Additional research on need- and merit-based financial aid and on the use of a simplified financial aid application process is also in progress.

Developmental Summer Bridge (DSB) programs are designed to reduce or eliminate the need for developmental education in colleges. Students with weak academic skills in math or English are offered the opportunity to participate in an intensive, accelerated program during the summer before they begin college. DSB programs are designed to build students' skills and to increase their knowledge of, and comfort with, the college environment. Such programs are run by numerous colleges and univer-

sities in the state of Texas and have been encouraged and sometimes funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), a partner in NCPR's ongoing research.

In the summer of 2009, eight colleges collaborated with NCPR to study the effectiveness of Texas DSB programs. Funds from IES and Houston Endowment supported the work of the participating colleges. Using a random assignment evaluation design, programs selected their students by lottery from those who applied for admission. Participants in the research agreed to share their college records with NCPR, allowing researchers to learn about whether students who engage in these programs do better in college subsequently than those who do not. NCPR staff visited the colleges regularly during 2009 to help them to set up the research as well as to learn about program models. The first report on this project, to be released in August 2010, will describe how these programs are developed, designed, and implemented, and it will provide preliminary information on student outcomes. A full report on the results of this project will be available in January 2012.

Led by researchers from MDRC, NCPR is evaluating learning communities for students in need of remediation at six community colleges around the country. Transcript-level data are being used to evaluate the impact of assigning students to a learning community, using a number of outcome measures that include GPA, credits earned, and degree completion. The sites cover a wide range of learning communities, with some focused on developmental math, others focused on developmental English or reading, and one with a career focus. These courses are linked with student success courses, other developmental courses, and college content courses in different configurations across the sites.

The participating colleges have operated 161 learning communities over the course of the project, and nearly 7,000 students have been randomly assigned. The design of this study is described in a paper titled *The Learning Communities Demonstration: Rationale, Sites, and Research Design* (see p. 20). A report based on findings from the first round of implementation research will soon be published. A series of impact reports will also be released by NCPR over the next two years.

CCRC has for some time carried out research on dual enrollment programs, which enable high school students to enroll in college courses and earn college credits. While such programs were once limited to high-achieving, academically focused stu-

dents, today many educators and policymakers view dual enrollment as a strategy to help a wider range of students, including career and technical education students, make the transition from high school to college.

To further strengthen the research base on dual enrollment, IES is, through NCPER, providing partial funding for the evaluation of the Concurrent Courses Initiative. Funded by The James Irvine Foundation and managed by CCRC, this initiative supports eight secondary/postsecondary partnerships in California in developing, enhancing, and expanding career-focused dual enrollment programs, particularly for low-income or underrepresented youth (see p. 11). Participating students are being tracked over time and their outcomes compared to similar non-participants.

NCPER is complementing its research on remediation and dual enrollment with large-scale statistical studies using state unit record data from at least two states, Florida and Tennessee. In 2008, a paper on the impact of remedial courses in Florida, titled *The Impact of Postsecondary Remediation Using a Regression Discontinuity Approach: Addressing Endogenous Sorting and Noncompliance*, was released. A second paper using Florida data that examines how the impact of remediation varies by type of student (by gender, race, and age, for example) will soon be available.

Building on a project that began at CCRC, NCPER researchers are also conducting quantitative analyses of dual enrollment using Florida data. The original study (described in a report titled *The Postsecondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States*, see p. 20) found positive relationships between participation in dual enrollment and a range of postsecondary outcomes. Using more data and different statistical techniques, NCPER researchers will estimate the strength of any causal relationship between dual enrollment mathematics and postsecondary outcomes.

In addition, IES provides partial support for an ongoing NCPER-related project, called the H&R Block FAFSA experiment, co-led by Bridget Terry Long of Harvard University. This project, undertaken in Ohio and North Carolina, provided an intervention to streamline both the financial aid application process and students' access to accurate and personalized higher education financial aid information. The intervention consisted of H&R Block tax professionals helping low- to middle-income families in the treatment group complete

the free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) and giving these families an immediate estimate of their eligibility for federal and state financial aid as well as information about local postsecondary education options.

Analysis by the researchers suggests that individuals who received assistance with the FAFSA and information about aid were substantially more likely to submit the aid application. High school seniors among this group were also much more likely to enroll in college and receive need-based financial aid the following fall. The program also increased college enrollment for independent adults with no prior college experience. Results from the study will soon be released as an NCPER Working Paper.

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Download NCPER reports and sign up for email updates at www.postsecondaryresearch.org.

Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count

CCRC continues to be a partner in Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count, a multi-year national initiative to help more community college students succeed. The initiative, which is particularly concerned about student groups that traditionally have faced significant barriers to success, including students of color and low-income students, emphasizes the use of data to inform change. Conceived in 2004 by Lumina Foundation for Education, Achieving the Dream (www.achievingthedream.org) now involves more than 100 institutions in 22 states, reaching nearly one million students. CCRC strives to maximize learning from the initiative by conducting research using data from participating colleges and states.

In collaboration with the research organization MDRC, CCRC is conducting an evaluation of the “culture of evidence” model that is being tested by Achieving the Dream. Colleges establish a culture of evidence when decisions about the design, management, and funding of academic programs and services are made based on evidence of what works to improve student outcomes. A report based on fieldwork at the 13 round-three Achieving the Dream colleges, titled *Achieving the Dream Colleges in Pennsylvania and Washington State: Early Progress Toward Building a Culture of Evidence*, was released in March 2009 (see p. 18).

In March 2010, CCRC plans to release a report

based on a case study of El Paso Community College (EPCC), titled *Collaborating to Create Change: How El Paso Community College Improved the Readiness of Its Incoming Students Through Achieving the Dream*. The report describes how this Achieving the Dream college collaborated with the University of Texas at El Paso and 12 local independent school districts in the El Paso area to develop and bring to scale an improved process for helping high school students prepare for entry into college. The strategy the college adopted focuses on preparation for the college assessment test. Since it was established, fewer entering EPCC students have placed into developmental programs. A report on the implementation and effectiveness of Achieving the Dream at all 26 first-round colleges (of which EPCC is one) from MDRC and CCRC is planned for release in summer 2010.

CCRC also works with state community college agencies in using student tracking data to better understand patterns of student progression, particularly through developmental education sequences and gatekeeper courses. A November 2009 report, *Promoting Gatekeeper Course Success Among Community College Students Needing Remediation* (see p. 17), examines academically underprepared community college students across the state of Virginia. Findings from the CCRC study suggest that few students referred to developmental education progress through their developmental education sequence of courses to succeed in college-level courses: within four years, only 23 and 45 percent of students in the study successfully completed a course in college-level math and English, respectively. While some students' progress was thwarted by failing a developmental course, a more important factor was that many students chose not to enroll in developmental education in the first place. Of those who did enroll, many of those who successfully completed one or more courses failed to progress to the next course in their sequence.

Similar results were found in a CCRC study using data submitted by all Achieving the Dream colleges to a database maintained by the initiative's partners. An analysis on the progression of students through developmental courses using these data (see *CCRC Working Paper No. 15*, p. 19) found that fewer than half of students who are referred to a sequence of developmental education courses actually complete the entire sequence to which they are referred. The results also show that more students exit their developmental sequences because they *did not enroll* in the first or a subsequent course than

because they *failed or withdrew from* a course in which they were enrolled. The study concludes that community colleges need to make fundamental changes in their approach to developmental education—modest changes will not have much effect on the problem.

CCRC is also working with two community college state systems to examine online learning. Over the last decade, community colleges have rapidly expanded their online course offerings; however, some administrators have concerns about the relatively high dropout rate of students enrolled in online courses. CCRC is particularly focused on the potential impact of online learning on students referred to developmental education, who are already highly vulnerable to dropout. Working with the states of Virginia and Washington, CCRC is conducting an analysis of course completion data for face-to-face, fully online, and hybrid courses. The analysis will help establish whether high online dropout rates are due to the types of courses that tend to be offered online, the characteristics of students who choose to take the courses, or to the method of course instruction. Results will help administrators make more strategic decisions in terms of online course implementation and expansion. A report on Virginia data will be available in spring 2010.

Finally, CCRC is working with MDRC to assess a new Achieving the Dream program, the Developmental Education Initiative (www.deionline.org). As part of their Achieving the Dream efforts, several colleges piloted small-scale developmental education reforms with promising results. In an effort to build on these successes, 15 colleges from six states have been selected to participate in the Developmental Education Initiative, with the goal of expanding innovative developmental education strategies to a large scale across a three-year time frame. The evaluation of the initiative will examine factors that impact successful scale-up and will link program implementation and scale-up to trends in student completion and progression. A report on this study will be available in fall 2012.

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Transforming Community Colleges to Accelerate Success for Low-Income Young Adults

CCRC has recently begun work on a large research project to inform the Bill & Melinda Gates

Foundation's Postsecondary Success initiative (for more on CCRC's role in this initiative, see p. 13). The goal is to build a rigorous base of research knowledge on strategies for accelerating progression and increasing success among low-income young adults attending community colleges. Among other activities, CCRC will conduct eight new studies in four states. Six of these will use community college system data (from Washington State, Virginia, and CUNY). The remaining studies will use institutional data from community colleges in Colorado and Maryland. Each of the studies will involve multivariate quantitative analysis as well as a qualitative component to investigate program-level mechanisms and underlying institutional policies and supports.

Study 1. Evaluation of I-BEST (Washington State). Using data on two-year college students from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), CCRC will conduct an evaluation of I-BEST, a contextualized instruction model in which adult basic skills and career-technical faculty jointly design and teach college-level occupational courses for adult basic skills students. For more on this study and previous CCRC research on I-BEST, see p. 9.

Study 2. Structure of effective occupational programs (Washington State). This study will examine the structure and supports provided by community and technical college occupational programs that are effective in enabling low-income young adults to complete credentials and obtain employment. This study will test whether highly structured and focused programs that provide students with a more directed curriculum and proactive student supports lead to better outcomes for students who are not well-prepared for college-level work. CCRC will develop and apply a protocol for measuring key dimensions of program structure and then use unit record data from the SBCTC to compare student outcomes between more- and less-structured programs.

Studies 3, 4, and 5. Studies in partnership with the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). Through its strategic planning process, VCCS has set ambitious goals for improving student retention, with a special focus on disadvantaged students. CCRC has begun several quantitative studies using Virginia data (supported by Lumina Foundation as part of the Achieving the Dream initiative) examining *Online Learning (Study 3)*, *Student Success Courses (Study 4)*, and developmental education policies and practices that contribute to *Gatekeeper Success for Remedial Students (Study 5)*. The new

research in Virginia will build upon these studies through qualitative investigation of the practices of programs and colleges found through quantitative analysis to be effective in serving low-skill young adults.

Study 6. Developmental education assessment, placement, programming, and outcomes (CUNY). The CUNY system includes six community colleges, which enroll large numbers of minority, low-income, and underprepared students. CUNY provides an excellent setting to examine the effectiveness of remedial placement policies because, unlike many other college systems, it tracks students' initial placement exam scores, remedial placement recommendations, developmental course enrollments, and exit exam scores. Individual CUNY community colleges have also implemented a wide variety of innovations to improve outcomes for developmental students, including acceleration, non-academic preparation, and contextualization. CCRC will use student unit record data from all six colleges to examine remedial assessment and placement policies, programmatic interventions, and the impact of each on students, particularly low-income young adults.

Study 7. Study of accelerated developmental education models (FastStart at Community College of Denver; associated study of ALP at Community College of Baltimore County). The FastStart program, which provides intensive accelerated and contextualized instruction with extensive student supports, has received a great deal of attention nationally through its association with the Ford Bridges to Opportunity and Breaking Through initiatives. The program was first implemented in 2005, and it now enrolls approximately 150 students each semester. Participants are largely age 22 or younger and non-white; about half are Pell grant recipients. Both the Community College of Denver (CCD) and the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) will share unit record data with CCRC that will allow a comparison of outcomes of FastStart students with non-participating CCD students who have similar characteristics. In a related study funded in part by Lumina Foundation for Education as part of the Achieving the Dream initiative, CCRC will conduct a similar analysis of the Community College of Baltimore County's Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), in which upper-level developmental writing students are "mainstreamed" into English 101 classes that include students placed directly into college English. The ALP students also enroll in a companion course

that meets in the class period immediately following the English 101 class. CCRC will analyze the effects of the program.

Study 8. Study of accelerated learning communities (Front Range Community College, Colorado). Front Range's program is designed to accelerate underprepared students' progress through college-level courses through team-taught "blended" courses. These courses combine developmental content in reading and writing with college-level content in introductory degree-credit courses, enabling remedial students to move directly into college-level work. The program, which began around 2005, is expected to grow to 160 students per semester by the fall of 2010. Administrators are planning to institutionalize the learning community model, with the goal of linking 85 percent of their highest-level remedial English courses with transfer-level general education courses. Front Range Community College has agreed to share unit record data with CCRC to investigate the model's effectiveness.

In evaluating Front Range's learning communities, the Community College of Denver's FastStart program, the Community College of Baltimore County's ALP, and Washington State's I-BEST program, CCRC will collect cost data and estimate the cost-benefit of each model. This analysis will aid in the assessment of the potential productivity gains that could be achieved by implementing these approaches on a large scale.

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I-BEST: Accelerating the Transition from Basic Skills to College and a Career Pathway

Each year, community colleges, schools, and community organizations offer basic skills instruction to more than 2.5 million adults with limited skills and education. Such programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE) and GED preparation programs for individuals who do not have a high school credential and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs for persons with limited proficiency in English. Yet few of these students advance successfully to college-level education and training, even when they are enrolled in a basic skills program offered by a community college.

As part of its Gates Foundation-funded research on transforming community colleges to accelerate student success (see pp. 7 and 13), CCRC will evalu-

ate the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training program, or I-BEST, an innovative program model developed by the community and technical college system in Washington State to increase the rate at which adult basic skills students enter and succeed in postsecondary occupational education and training. In the I-BEST model, basic skills instructors and college-level career-technical faculty jointly design and teach college-level occupational courses for adult basic skills students. Instruction in basic skills is thereby integrated with instruction in college-level career-technical skills. The I-BEST model challenges the conventional notion that basic skills instruction should be completed by students prior to starting college-level courses. The approach thus offers the potential to accelerate the transition of adult basic skills students to college programs.

In a recent Ford Foundation-funded analysis using student unit record data from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (see *CCRC Working Paper No. 16*, p. 18), CCRC found that students participating in I-BEST achieved better educational outcomes over two years than did non-participating basic skills students who nonetheless enrolled in at least one workforce course in the same academic year. CCRC also found that I-BEST participants performed better than a group of basic skills students who were matched to the I-BEST students using propensity score matching (PSM). For example, I-BEST students earned, on average, 52 quarter-term college credits over the two-year tracking period, compared to an average of 34 quarter-term credits for the matched comparison group. I-BEST students had a higher probability of persisting into the second year: 78 percent, compared with 61 percent for the matched group. The probability of earning an occupational certificate was 55 percent for I-BEST students, compared with only 15 percent for the matched group.

CCRC will conduct further research to better understand and account for the process by which students are selected into I-BEST. CCRC also plans to: track degree attainment and employment outcomes of I-BEST students over a longer time period than the previous analysis; examine the practices of particular I-BEST programs that produce superior outcomes; and collect financial data to estimate program cost-effectiveness. Special attention will be given to the effects of I-BEST on low-income young adults.

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Student Achievement Initiative: Assessing the Implications for Higher Education Performance-Funding Policy

The Obama administration, along with several states and private funders, including the Gates and Lumina foundations, have set ambitious goals for dramatically increasing the number of Americans who earn postsecondary credentials over the next 10-15 years. To achieve these goals, it will be necessary to increase postsecondary access and success among groups of students who are underrepresented in higher education, including those who come from poor primary and secondary schools, adults working in low-wage jobs, and immigrants with limited English proficiency. Because community colleges have long been an entry point into higher education for students from these groups, much attention is being focused on increasing the rates at which their students, particularly those who are educationally disadvantaged, complete programs that lead to career-path employment and further education. And because community colleges are heavily reliant for their revenue on state and local funding (as opposed to tuition), given the dire fiscal straits of most states, these increases will have to be achieved to a large extent by improving the productivity of colleges without extensive new funding. Thus, community colleges will have to increase their “throughput” by rethinking how they use their existing resources to support student progression and success.

In 2006, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges approved a policy called the Student Achievement Initiative that provides monetary incentives to community and technical colleges in Washington State to increase the number of students who attain a set of defined “achievement points.” While other state performance measurement policies tend to focus on degree completion and other “ultimate” outcomes, the Washington State’s achievement points include both completion of credentials and training programs and intermediate milestones (such as passing a college-level math course) that research shows are associated with a higher probability of program completion. The achievement points encompass the full range of Washington State community and technical college mission areas, including adult basic skills and developmental education as well as baccalaureate transfer and career-technical education. Under the policy, colleges receive increases in their base budget funding for increasing the total number of achievement points their students attain in a

given year compared to the baseline year. The SBCTC provides colleges in the system with quarterly student unit record data to track trends in attainment of achievement points by their students, evaluate the impact of efforts to increase achievement, and identify opportunities for further improvements.

Washington’s Student Achievement Initiative is designed not only to encourage more attention to student outcomes (as are most state performance funding policies), but to provide colleges with real-time data about where students do and do not make forward progress, so that they can target their increasingly scarce resources to where along the pipeline they can have the greatest impact with interventions. By focusing attention on the flow of students across the full spectrum of college programs, the policy is intended to motivate colleges to bring about systemic changes in programs and student support services that produce substantial improvements in rates of progression and success by students, including those who enter college poorly prepared.

The Student Achievement Initiative has attracted the attention of other states interested in encouraging colleges to improve outcomes for students on a substantial scale. The Ohio Board of Regents recently established a new performance funding policy for public two- and four-year colleges that includes elements explicitly modeled on Washington State’s achievement points (Ohio calls them “momentum points”).

With funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CCRC will conduct a study to assess the implications of Washington State’s Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) performance funding policy for strengthening state community college performance incentive policies nationwide. The study will assess how and to what extent the SAI model of performance funding encourages colleges to work to improve student outcomes. The study, which will build on an earlier Lumina Foundation-funded formative assessment of the Student Achievement Initiative during the 2007-08 “learning year” (see *Formative Evaluation of the Student Achievement Initiative “Learning Year,”* p. 19), will be conducted in partnership with researchers from the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy (IHELP) at Sacramento State University. The project will produce an interim report by December 2010 and a final report and primer for state policymakers by December 2012. The technical reports and primer will be designed to inform the decisions of policymakers both within and outside of

Washington State on the design of effective performance incentive policies.

Lead contact:

Davis Jenkins, davisjenkins@gmail.com.

Concurrent Courses Initiative: Pathways to College and Careers

Combining concurrent enrollment with career and technical education is the approach being used by The James Irvine Foundation and CCRC in a California-based initiative aimed at helping low-income and other struggling students transition to college and persist once there. Concurrent, or dual, enrollment provides high school students with the opportunity to enroll in college courses and earn college credits. Career and technical education offers a high school education that may seem particularly engaging and relevant and that may guide students toward clearer pathways to further study and work.

CCRC's previous research comparing career and technical education (CTE) students who participated in dual enrollment with other CTE students who did not do so found consistently better academic outcomes for the participants, while controlling for a range of student characteristics. In terms of likelihood of postsecondary enrollment and college GPA, the same study showed that males, low-income students, and low-achieving high school students all seemed to benefit from dual enrollment to a greater extent than their peers who entered college with more social, economic, and educational advantages (see *The Postsecondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States*, p. 20). There appears, then, to be great potential in combining dual enrollment and technical education, and in targeting this approach to students who would likely have difficulty preparing for, entering, and persisting in college.

Thus, in 2008, The James Irvine Foundation (www.irvine.org) launched the Concurrent Courses Initiative by providing support to eight secondary/postsecondary partnerships in California to develop, enhance, and expand career-focused dual enrollment programs. Most of these partnerships are now in their second year of providing college courses and support services to the targeted students through career pathways. As a result, hundreds of students are earning college credits and participating in college orientation and readiness activities.

CCRC is directing, managing, and evaluating

the initiative, which will continue through August 2011. To track student participants, CCRC is working with Cal-PASS, the California Partnership for Achieving Student Success, a data collection and sharing system. Another initiative partner, the Career Ladders Project (CLP), which works to strengthen educational and career advancement opportunities for Californians, is providing technical assistance to the partnerships. Finally, additional support is being provided by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences through the National Center for Postsecondary Research (NCPR) to determine the feasibility of conducting an experimental evaluation of the initiative.

The evaluation CCRC is conducting includes both a qualitative analysis of program implementation and a quantitative analysis of student outcomes. A report on the various design features of the different programs will be available in spring 2010; the first longitudinal report on student outcomes will follow in the summer. CCRC researchers have also written a report on current policies and practices that shape dual enrollment in California (*Dual Enrollment Policies and Practices: Earning College Credit in California High Schools*, see p. 19). For a list of the funded partnerships, and to download reports, see the Initiative's website: www.concurrentcourses.org.

Lead contact: Katherine Hughes, hughes@tc.edu.

Employer Perceptions of Two-Year Degrees in Information Technology

CCRC is partnering with the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies at Bellevue Community College (Washington State) and Macomb Community College (Michigan) on a three-year project to examine industry perceptions of two-year information technology (IT) program graduates in the Seattle and Detroit labor markets. CCRC researchers have conducted extensive interviews with a range of employers in these two labor markets to examine their knowledge, experience, and interest in IT program graduates. The research also seeks to understand the hiring process for program graduates among different types of employers, so that community colleges can better target their efforts to engage with employers. This project is funded by the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education program. A final report on the research findings will be available in 2010.

Lead contact: Michelle Van Noy, vannoy@tc.edu.

Higher Education Performance Funding in Multiple States

One of the great puzzles about state performance funding systems is that, while they have been popular, they have also been very unstable. Between 1979 and 2007, 25 states enacted performance funding, but nearly half of those states dropped it over the years. Moreover, the states that have retained performance funding have often and substantially changed their funding levels and criteria for allocating it.

This project, funded by Lumina Foundation for Education, examines what design features, strategies for policy enactment and implementation, and sociopolitical circumstances make performance funding systems more likely to be adopted by states and, if enacted, more likely to persist and be less subject to frequent and large changes in state funding levels and funding formulas. The project analyzes the experiences of eight states: two states that have established and sustained performance funding systems (Tennessee and Florida), three that established such systems but subsequently repealed them (Illinois, Missouri, and South Carolina), one state that established, relinquished, and reestablished performance funding (Washington), and two that have not adopted state performance funding systems (California and Georgia). Recent reports from this ongoing study include *CCRC Working Papers No. 17 & 18* (see pp. 18 and 17).

Lead contact:

Kevin Dougherty, dougherty@tc.edu.

Postsecondary Content Area Reading-Writing Intervention: Development and Determination of Potential Efficacy

An intervention study was recently conducted with developmental education students at Bronx Community College of the City University of New York, Los Angeles Pierce College, and Norwalk Community College. This CCRC project was funded wholly by the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education in the amount of \$1,168,758. The study developed and tested a curricular supplement called the Content Comprehension Strategy Intervention (CCSI), which provided students with guided, self-paced practice in several reading comprehension and writing skills that are necessary to learn in postsecondary classrooms but difficult for academically underprepared students. Specifically, the intervention involved practice in

written summarization, asking questions based on textbook passages, vocabulary usage, answering questions of the type found on high-stakes tests, and writing opinions about controversial topics. The CCSI was contextualized in either science text or traditional developmental education text. A panel of community college faculty collaborated with project staff to develop the intervention.

A quasi-experimental methodology was used in several cycles of piloting and testing the intervention, involving randomized assignment to text conditions within intervention classrooms and the inclusion of a purposive, business-as-usual comparison group. Two outcome measures were used to assess potential effectiveness, a locally developed measure of the ability to summarize science text, and the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. In a final test of the fully developed intervention with 317 students at two of the sites, it was found that students who received the intervention showed significantly more gain than the comparison group in important aspects of written summarization: they included more key ideas when summarizing source text, and they wrote longer and more accurate summaries (effect sizes 0.36 to 0.62). The findings suggest that self-paced, guided practice in selected literacy skills holds promise for improving outcomes for community college developmental education students. Report-preparation is now in progress.

Lead contact: Dolores Perin, perin@tc.edu.

Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative National Center

The Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative (AMTEC) National Center for Excellence is a National Science Foundation funded consortium of 25 community colleges and 21 automotive manufacturing and service companies. The consortium brings together educators and industry representatives to: build consensus around the skill standards needed by technicians, develop course/subject matter content and delivery systems, and share and disseminate promising practices. Emphasis is placed on the use of cutting edge technologies in both manufacturing and in the delivery of educational content. The Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) is the consortium's lead partner. CCRC serves as an evaluation partner, providing data and findings from surveys, interviews, site visits, and college records that will support program development.

Lead contact: Elisabeth Barnett, barnett@tc.edu.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CCRC Begins Participation in Gates Foundation's Postsecondary Success Initiative

In May 2009, CCRC received a three-year, \$5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to carry out research to help identify the most productive investments in community colleges for the foundation's Postsecondary Success (PS) initiative. Because of their open-access admission policies and relatively low tuition rates, community colleges enroll a high proportion of young adults from low-income families. The goal of the PS initiative, launched in 2008, is to double the number of low-income students who by age 26 earn a postsecondary degree or credential.

CCRC will produce a set of concrete recommendations for the PS initiative by early 2012. These recommendations will be based on a synthesis of knowledge gained from past research, from ongoing studies by other organizations, and from a new set of CCRC studies chosen to fill gaps in what is known about strategies for increasing community college student success (for more information about the specific studies, see *Transforming Community Colleges*, p. 7).

The new studies—each conducted using a mixed-method approach involving both quantitative and qualitative components—will examine seven strategies that are based on promising but largely untested ideas about what works to increase community college completion rates for low-income young adults: (1) assessing incoming students' needs, not just their level of academic skills (this is sometimes called “actionable assessment”); (2) providing highly structured and focused programs; (3) offering high-quality and engaging online courses; (4) implementing programs to accelerate student progress through developmental education; (5) contextualizing basic skills instruction in the teaching of academic or occupational content; (6) providing underprepared students with “student success” courses and other non-academic supports; and (7) aligning programs and services to support student progression and success.

CCRC will examine these strategies in terms of their impact on student success, their cost-effectiveness, and their feasibility. The research team will also identify program characteristics and orga-

nizational practices that support effective implementation of each strategy on a large scale.

Obama Unveils Community College Plan at Macomb

President Obama outlined a major plan in support of community colleges in a speech delivered on July 14, 2009, at Macomb Community College in Warren, Michigan. Macomb's president, James Jacobs, serves on CCRC's advisory board and previously held the position of associate director at CCRC. The President's proposal, called the American Graduation Initiative, aims to produce an



President Obama greeted by Dr. James Jacobs at Macomb Community College.

additional five million community college graduates by 2020. Projected to cost \$12 billion over the next decade, the plan includes competitive grants for community colleges to make innovations for improving students' educational and employment outcomes, a loan fund to upgrade college facilities, and a program to develop free online courses. Legislation concerning the proposal is now in Congress.

Hechinger Institute Works with CCRC on Fellowship Program

In September 2009, the Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media, housed at Teachers College, Columbia University, held its third annual residency week in the final year of its “Covering America, Covering Community Colleges” fellowship program, which is aimed at supporting in-depth coverage of education issues related to community



Scott Jaschik, editor at Inside Higher Ed, addressing this year's Hechinger Fellows.

colleges. CCRC provided mentoring, resources, and ideas to a group of a dozen journalist Fellows from across the nation who were selected to participate in the program this year, each of whom receives a stipend of \$7,500 to tackle a major project of their choice on community colleges. The Fellows will return this spring to discuss and showcase what they have learned.

The 2009–2010 Fellows spent a week in New York City visiting community colleges, conferring with experts, and attending professional development seminars. CCRC researchers discussed their areas of study with the journalists and fielded questions from the group. As opening speaker for this year's events, CCRC director Thomas Bailey outlined the latest research on developmental education and reminded the reporters of the critical role community colleges are playing in today's weakened economy. Topics to be covered by this year's Fellows include job retraining issues for laid-off auto workers, the implications of remedial math courses, and the use of federal stimulus funds by community colleges to train students for green jobs.

UPCOMING CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

National Association for Developmental Education 34th Annual Conference, Columbus, Ohio March 10–13, 2010

Content-Comprehension Strategy Intervention: A Model for Developmental Reading

Friday, March 12, 2010, 1:30–2:30 PM

Hyatt Regency, Taft A

Session Participants:

Richard E. Bailey, English Instructor, Henry Ford Community College
Dolores Perin, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

Promising Practices in Developmental Summer Bridge Programs

Friday, March 12, 2010, 1:30–2:30 PM

Hyatt Regency, Delaware D

Session Participants:

Elisabeth A. Barnett, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
John Wachen, Senior Research Assistant, CCRC
Conchita Hickey, Executive Director, University College, Texas A & M International University
Matea Vazquez, Instructor, Department of Developmental Mathematics, South Texas College

National Conference of State Legislatures

2010 National Education Seminar, New York City March 12–14, 2010

The Changing Role of Community Colleges

Saturday, March 13, 2010, 9:00–10:15 AM

Teachers College, Columbia University, Horace Mann 152

Session Participants:

Thomas Bailey, Director, CCRC
James Jacobs, President, Macomb Community College

Improving Student Success in Remedial Education

Saturday, March 13, 2010, 12:15–1:30 PM

Teachers College, Columbia University, Horace Mann 152

Session Participants:

Thomas Bailey, Director, CCRC
Shanna Jaggars, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
Peter Adams, Director of Accelerated Learning, Community College of Baltimore County

Performance Funding in Higher Education

Saturday, March 13, 2010, 1:45–3:00 PM

Teachers College, Columbia University, Horace Mann 152

Session Participant:

Kevin J. Dougherty, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

College Readiness: Next Steps for Advancing State Policy

Sunday, March 14, 2010, 10:30 AM–12:00 PM
 Sheraton Hotel and Towers, New York Ballroom, East and West,
 3rd Floor

Session Participants:

Thomas Bailey, Director, CCRC
 Patrick M. Callan, President, National Center for Public
 Policy and Higher Education
 David Spence, President, Southern Regional Education
 Board

American Education Finance Association

**35th Annual Conference, Richmond, Virginia
 March 18–20, 2010**

Financial Aid or Academic Harm? The Causal Effect of a Work-Study Job

Friday, March 19, 2010, 8:30–10:00 AM
 Omni Richmond, Potomac G

Session Participant:

Judith Scott-Clayton, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

Do Lowest Levels of Remedial Math Have Any Positive Effect for Community College Students?

Saturday, March 20, 2010, 11:30 AM–1:00 PM
 Omni Richmond, Shenandoah J

Session Participants:

Mina Dadgar, Research Assistant, CCRC
 Matthew Zeidenberg, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

League for Innovation in the Community College

**13th Annual Conference, Baltimore, Maryland
 March 28–31, 2010**

Examining Student Online Course Outcomes Across a Community College System

Sunday, March 28, 2010, 9:45–10:45 AM
 Hilton Baltimore, Level 3, Tubman A

Session Participants:

Shanna Jaggars, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
 Inez Farrell, Director of Instructional Technology,
 Academic Services and Research, Virginia
 Community College System
 Barbara Glenn, Dean, School of Arts, Humanities, and
 Social Sciences, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community
 College

Assessing Assessment: How Useful Are Placement Tests?

Sunday, March 28, 2010, 11:00 AM–12:00 PM
 Hilton Baltimore, Level 2, Key 12

Session Participants:

Katherine L. Hughes, Assistant Director, CCRC
 Nancy Ritze, Dean of Research, Planning and Assessment,
 Bronx Community College

Accelerating Math in Summer Bridge Programs: Getting Results

Monday, March 29, 2010, 11:00 AM–12:00 PM
 Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards, Level 1, Grand
 Ballroom East and West

Session Participants:

Elisabeth A. Barnett, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
 Aki Nakanishi, Senior Research Assistant, CCRC
 Alma Jasso, Developmental Math Instructor, Texas A&M
 International University

Building a Culture of Evidence: Two Achieving the Dream Case Studies

Tuesday, March 30, 2010, 8:00–9:00 AM
 Hilton Baltimore, Level 1, Johnson A

Session Participants:

Elizabeth M. Zachry, Research Associate, MDRC
 Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
 Genevieve Orr, Research Assistant, MDRC

New Research on Challenges and Opportunities for Postsecondary Career-Technical Education

Tuesday, March 30, 2010, 2:30–3:30 PM
 Hilton Baltimore, Level 3, Carroll A

Session Participants:

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
 Matt Zeidenberg, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
 James Jacobs, President, Macomb Community College

High School Students in College Courses: Learning to Do College

Wednesday, March 31, 2010, 9:15–10:15 AM
 Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards, Level 1, University 1-2

Session Participants:

Elisabeth A. Barnett, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
 Cecilia Cunningham, Executive Director, Middle College
 National Consortium
 Joyce Mitchell, Academic Director of High School
 Initiatives, Memphis City Schools

NCA/The Higher Learning Commission

**115th Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois
 April 9–13, 2010**

Developmental Education Initiative: Building on the Foundation of Achieving the Dream

Sunday, April 11, 2010, 2:15–3:00 PM
 Hyatt Regency Chicago, Room TBA

Session Participants:

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
 Laura Meeke, President, Eastern Gateway Community
 College
 Jerry Sue Thornton, President, Cuyahoga Community
 College

**Council for the Study of
Community Colleges**
52nd Annual Conference, Seattle, Washington
April 16–17, 2010

**New Research on the I-BEST Model for Accelerating
the Transition from Basic Skills to College and Career
Pathways**

Date: TBA

Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Room TBA

Session Participant:

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

**American Association of
Community Colleges**
90th Annual Convention, Seattle, Washington
April 17–20, 2010

**Systemwide Initiative to Improve Developmental
Education in Virginia**

Sunday, April 18, 2010, 11:15 AM–12:15 PM

Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Room 612

Session Participants:

Thomas Bailey, Director, CCRC

Nikki Edgcombe, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

Donna M. Jovanovich, Director of Institutional
Effectiveness, Virginia Community College System

John T. Dever, Executive Vice President, Academic and
Student Services, Northern Virginia Community
College

**Accelerating the Transition from Basic Skills to
College and Career Pathways Through I-BEST**

Sunday, April 18, 2010, 4:30–5:30 PM

Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Room 612

Session Participants:

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

Michele Johnson, Chancellor, Pierce College

Israel Mendoza, Director of Adult Basic Education,
Washington State Board for Community and
Technical Colleges

**Building a Culture of Evidence: Two Achieving the
Dream Case Studies**

Monday, April 19, 2010, 11:15 AM–12:15 PM

Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Room 608

Session Participants:

Elizabeth M. Zachry, Research Associate, MDRC

Genevieve Orr, Research Assistant, MDRC

Monica Reid Kerrigan, Research Associate, CCRC

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

*Join our researchers, staff,
and affiliates at the*

CCRC/NCPR

Open Reception

at the

**90th Annual AACC Convention
Sunday, April 18, 2010**

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Sheraton Seattle Hotel
Cirrus Room, 35th Floor

See you there!

**American Educational
Research Association**
2010 Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado
April 30–May 4, 2010

**High School Dual-Enrollment Programs: Are We Fast-
Tracking Students Too Fast?**

Saturday, May 1, 2010, 8:15–10:15 AM

Colorado Convention Center, Room 105

Session Participant:

Cecilia Speroni, Research Assistant, CCRC

**Building Bridges to Postsecondary Education for Low-
Skill Adults: Findings from Recent Research on
Promising Practices**

Saturday, May 1, 2010, 10:35 AM–12:05 PM

Colorado Convention Center, Room 702

Session Participants:

Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

Elisabeth A. Barnett, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

Sung-Woo Cho, Senior Research Assistant, CCRC

Debra Bragg, Director, Office of Community College
Research and Leadership, University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign

Michelle Tolbert, Associate Director, Adult Education,
MPR Associates, Inc.

Judith A. Alamprese, Principal Associate, Social and
Economic Division, Abt Associates, Inc.

**Student Success Courses and Education Outcomes in
Virginia Community Colleges**

Sunday, May 2, 2010, 2:15–3:45 PM

Colorado Convention Center, Korbel Ballroom 3

Session Participant:

Sung-Woo Cho, Senior Research Assistant, CCRC

Vice Presidential Address (Division J): Moving Beyond a Culture of Defense and Critique Toward More Theoretically Oriented, Policy Relevant Research on Community Colleges

Monday, May 3, 2010, 10:35 AM–12:05 PM
Colorado Convention Center, Room 107

Session Participants:

Susan B. Twombly, Professor and Chair, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, University of Kansas
Lisa E. Wolf-Wendel, Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, University of Kansas
Thomas Bailey, Director, CCRC
Linda Serra Hagedorn, Director, Research Institute for Studies in Higher Education, Iowa State University

Developmental Education Program Implementation Analysis: A Difference-in-Differences Approach

Monday, May 3, 2010, 12:25–1:55 PM
Colorado Convention Center, Korbel Ballroom 2

Session Participants:

Sung-Woo Cho, Senior Research Assistant, CCRC
Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC

Supporting High School Students in College Courses: A Symposium on Findings from Three Studies

Tuesday, May 4, 2010, 8:15–9:45 AM
Colorado Convention Center, Room 105

Session Participants:

Katherine L. Hughes, Assistant Director, CCRC
Thomas Bailey, Director, CCRC
Elisabeth A. Barnett, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
Andrea Venezia, Senior Research Associate, WestEd

Making Institutions Work for Students: Community Colleges' Use of Data to Improve Student Success

Tuesday, May 4, 2010, 12:25–1:55 PM
Colorado Convention Center, Room 105

Session Participants:

Thomas Brock, Director, Young Adults and Postsecondary Education Policy Area, MDRC
Elizabeth M. Zachry, Research Associate, MDRC
Davis Jenkins, Senior Research Associate, CCRC
Monica Reid Kerrigan, Research Associate, CCRC
Genevieve Orr, Research Assistant, MDRC

Association for Institutional Research

50th Annual Forum, Chicago, Illinois
May 29–June 2, 2010

High School Dual-Enrollment Programs: Are We Fast-Tracking Students Too Fast?

Time: TBA

Location: TBA

Session Participant:

Cecilia Speroni, Research Assistant, CCRC

Please check CCRC's website for conference details and updates: <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu>.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

REPORTS AND PAPERS

Continuity and Change in Long-Lasting State Performance Funding Systems for Higher Education: The Cases of Tennessee and Florida

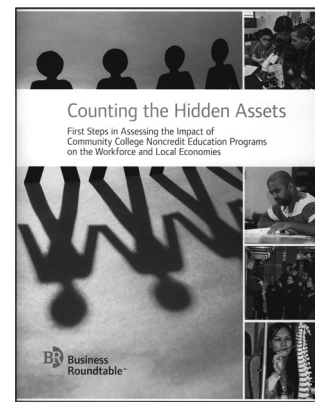
Kevin J. Dougherty and Rebecca S. Natow. *Community College Research Center; CCRC Working Paper No. 18, February 2010.*

One of the key ways that state governments pursue better higher education performance is through performance funding, which ties state funding directly to specific indicators of institutional performance, such as rates of graduation and job placement. This paper examines the ways that performance funding systems in two states with long-lasting systems have changed over time and what political and social conditions explain the changes.

Counting the Hidden Assets: First Steps in Assessing the Impact of Community College Noncredit Education Programs on the Workforce and Local Economies

Macomb Community College, LaGuardia Community College, and the Community College Research Center. *Business Roundtable, December 2009.*

Noncredit education is an important component of community college program offerings, but the extent of student enrollment in noncredit programs is largely unknown. Currently, there is no standard national measurement of the direct educational and economic benefits of noncredit courses to their communities, so they are not systematically evaluated. Existing data collection systems are not designed to capture the most basic information about noncredit activities. This paper makes the case for the training hour as the basic unit of measurement and proposes a taxonomy to classify and describe the range of noncredit activities delivered by community colleges.



Promoting Gatekeeper Course Success Among Community College Students Needing Remediation: Findings and Recommendations from a Virginia Study (Summary Report)

Davis Jenkins, Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Josipa Roksa. *Community College Research Center; November 2009.*

This report summarizes key findings and recommendations from a CCRC study that examined student characteristics, course-taking patterns, and other factors associated with higher probabilities that students in Virginia community colleges who require remediation will take and pass math and English gatekeeper courses. A full-length technical version of the report is also available.

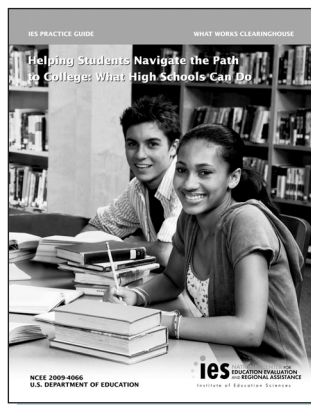
Performance Accountability Systems for Community Colleges: Lessons for the Voluntary Framework of Accountability for Community Colleges

Kevin J. Dougherty, Rachel Hare, and Rebecca S. Natow. Community College Research Center, November 2009.

This report discusses findings and implications of a study commissioned by the College Board to inform the development of the Voluntary Framework of Accountability for Community Colleges. CCRC researchers identified the performance indicators that states are already using for their community colleges and interviewed state higher education officials and local community college leaders on their experiences with the collection and use of such performance data.

Helping Students Navigate the Path to College: What High Schools Can Do

William G. Tierney, Thomas Bailey, Jill Constantine, Neal Finkelstein, and Nicole Farmer Hurd. National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, NCEE #2009-4066, September 2009.



This guide is intended to help schools and districts develop practices to increase access to higher education. A panel of experts in college access programs and strategies and in research methods developed the recommendations in the guide, which includes specific steps on how to implement the recommendations that are targeted at school- and district-level administrators, teachers, counselors, and related education staff. The guide also indicates the level of research evidence demonstrating that each recommended practice is effective.

The Demise of Higher Education Performance Funding Systems in Three States

Kevin J. Dougherty and Rebecca S. Natow. Community College Research Center, CCRC Working Paper No. 17, May 2009.

To better understand the unstable institutionalization of performance funding in higher education, this paper examines three states—Illinois, Washington, and Florida—that have experienced performance funding program cessation. The researchers drew upon interviews and documentary analyses that were conducted in these states. The paper outlines several common features in the three states and discusses the implications of these findings for advocates of performance funding.

Educational Outcomes of I-BEST, Washington State Community and Technical College System’s Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program: Findings from a Multivariate Analysis

Davis Jenkins, Matthew Zeidenberg, and Gregory S. Kienzl. Community College Research Center, CCRC Working Paper No. 16, May 2009.

Nationally, relatively few of the more than 2.5 million

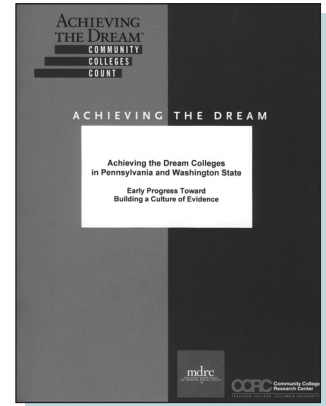
adults who enroll annually in basic skills programs advance successfully to college-level coursework. This paper presents findings from a CCRC study on the outcomes of I-BEST, an innovative program developed by the community and technical colleges in Washington State to increase the rate at which adult basic skills students enter and succeed in postsecondary occupational education and training. The study found that students participating in I-BEST achieved better educational outcomes than did similar non-participants.

Achieving the Dream Colleges in Pennsylvania and Washington State: Early Progress Toward Building a Culture of Evidence

Davis Jenkins, Todd Ellwein, John Wachen, Monica Reid Kerrigan, and Sung-Woo Cho. Community College Research Center and MDRC, May 2009.

Colleges participating in the Achieving the Dream initiative commit to using data to improve programs and services in ways that lead to increased student success—a process known as “building a culture of evidence.”

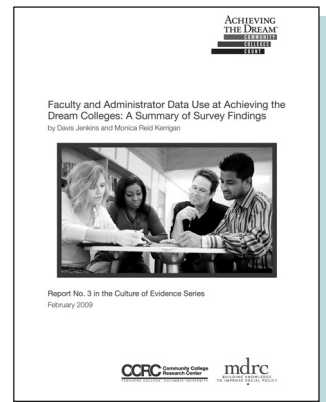
This report describes the progress made by the 13 Pennsylvania and Washington State community colleges that comprise Round 3 of the initiative after planning and one year of implementation. The findings from this study will be compared with follow-up research that CCRC and MDRC will conduct to evaluate the progress of the colleges at the end of the five-year project period.



Faculty and Administrator Data Use at Achieving the Dream Colleges: A Summary of Survey Findings

Davis Jenkins and Monica Reid Kerrigan. Achieving the Dream, Community College Research Center, and MDRC, Report No. 3 in the Culture of Evidence Series, February 2009.

This report summarizes findings from a study based largely on a 100-item survey instrument developed by CCRC and MDRC. More than 4,000 faculty and administrators at 41 Achieving the Dream colleges were surveyed about what kinds of student data they use, how accessible data on students are at their college, how they use data in their jobs, and what types of data they find most useful. Full report findings are also available.



Referral, Enrollment, and Completion in Developmental Education Sequences in Community Colleges

Thomas Bailey, Dong Wook Jeong, and Sung-Woo Cho. *Community College Research Center, CCRC Working Paper No. 15, December 2008 (Revised November 2009).*

Many students entering community colleges are referred to one or more levels of developmental education. Relying primarily on longitudinal student data from Achieving the Dream colleges, this paper analyzes the patterns and determinants of student progression through sequences of developmental education starting from initial referral. Results indicate that fewer than one half of the students who are referred to remediation actually complete the entire sequence to which they are referred. About 30 percent of students referred to developmental education do not enroll in any remedial course. A final version of this paper is available online as a journal article in *Economics of Education Review* (see p. 20).

Challenge and Opportunity: Rethinking the Role and Function of Developmental Education in Community College

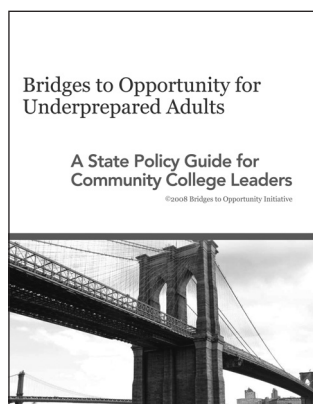
Thomas Bailey. *Community College Research Center, CCRC Working Paper No. 14, November 2008.*

This paper reviews evidence on the number of students who enter community colleges with weak academic skills and on the incidence of developmental education. It then reports on what happens to developmental students and reviews the research on the effectiveness of programs designed to strengthen weak academic skills. A broad developmental education reform agenda is recommended, based on a comprehensive approach to assessment, more rigorous research, a blurring of the distinction between developmental and “college-ready” students, and strategies to streamline developmental programs and accelerate students’ progress toward engagement in college-level work. A final version of this paper appears in the journal *New Directions for Community Colleges* (see p. 20).

Bridges to Opportunity for Underprepared Adults: A State Policy Guide for Community College Leaders

Bridges to Opportunity Initiative, October 2008.

Based on lessons learned from the Community College Bridges to Opportunity Initiative, this guide describes what states can do to break down barriers that stand in the way of success of underprepared adult students at community colleges. Funded by the Ford Foundation, Bridges was a multi-year, six-state effort designed to bring about changes in state policy that improve education and employment outcomes for educationally and economically disadvantaged adults.



Formative Evaluation of the Student Achievement Initiative “Learning Year”: Report to the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and College Spark Washington.

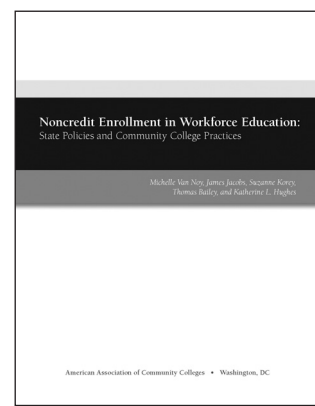
Davis Jenkins, Todd Ellwein, and Katherine Boswell. *Community College Research Center, October 2008 (Revised January 2009).*

In September 2007, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges launched the Student Achievement Initiative (SAI), a system-wide policy to reward colleges for improvements in student achievement. This report presents findings from an independent qualitative review of the initiative conducted by CCRC during the 2007-08 SAI learning year. College personnel at 17 colleges were interviewed about their understanding of the initiative and their responses to it, and key stakeholders and policymakers were interviewed to better understand the policy context within which SAI was conceived and is now being implemented.

Noncredit Enrollment in Workforce Education: State Policies and Community College Practices

Michelle Van Noy, James Jacobs, Suzanne Korey, Thomas Bailey, and Katherine L. Hughes. *American Association of Community Colleges and Community College Research Center, August 2008.*

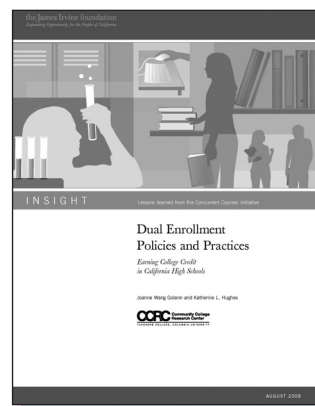
Noncredit workforce education can play an important role in responding to local labor market demands, while also connecting students to long-term educational opportunities and documenting outcomes in a meaningful way. Drawing on a CCRC study of community college noncredit workforce education that included interviews with state policymakers in all 50 states and case studies of 20 community colleges in 10 states, this report discusses findings and offers recommendations on state policies and community college practices.



Dual Enrollment Policies and Practices: Earning College Credit in California High Schools

Joanne Wang Golann and Katherine L. Hughes. *The James Irvine Foundation, August 2008.*

This report is intended to inform educators, policymakers, administrators, and researchers about current policies and practices that shape dual enrollment in California. The report clarifies and summarizes current policy on dual enrollment in California, reviews the research on dual enroll-



ment, and shares examples of existing programs that are successfully providing college credit opportunities to California high school students. The report also discusses how this information has informed the development of the Concurrent Courses Initiative, funded by The James Irvine Foundation.

The Learning Communities Demonstration: Rationale, Sites, and Research Design

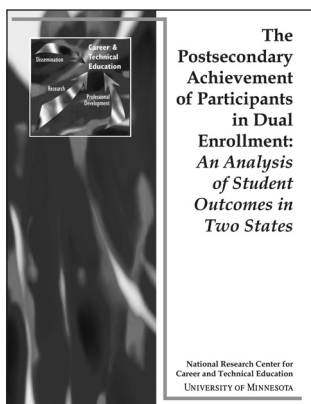
Mary G. Visher, Heather Wathington, Lashawn Richburg-Hayes, and Emily Schneider, with Oscar Cerna, Christine Sansone, and Michelle Ware. *National Center for Postsecondary Research, NCPR Working Paper, May 2008.*

With its NCPR partners, MDRC has launched a multi-college demonstration of learning communities that tests six different models in six community colleges across the country, all but one of which are designed to help developmental students succeed. This report describes the goals and methodology of the study.

The Postsecondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States

Melinda Mechur Karp, Juan Carlos Calcagno, Katherine L. Hughes, Dong Wook Jeong, and Thomas Bailey. *National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, University of Minnesota, October 2007.*

Despite the popularity and growth of dual enrollment programs, little is known about their efficacy. The study reported on here sought to assess the effectiveness of dual enrollment programs in promoting high school graduation and postsecondary achievement. Using quantitative analysis of large datasets, the researchers examined the influence of dual enrollment program participation on students in the State of Florida and in New York City, with a specific focus in both locations on career and technical education (CTE) students. The study suggests that dual enrollment is a useful strategy for encouraging postsecondary success for all students, including those in CTE programs.



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