

Guided Pathways Next Frontiers: Scale of Adoption Assessment

What is the purpose of this assessment?

In *More Essential Than Ever: Community College Pathways to Educational and Career Success* (Harvard Education Press, 2025), CCRC researchers draw on a decade of research on whole-college guided pathways reforms at more than 100 community colleges nationally to show how colleges have implemented large-scale changes to help students better navigate the journey to completion. They argue that to achieve better and more equitable outcomes—and to recruit and retain more students in a highly competitive market—colleges must not only remove barriers to completion but also strengthen pathways to student goals after graduation, thus making their investment of money, time, and effort worth it.

More Essential Than Ever details strategies with case studies of advanced implementer colleges in five frontiers of practice for strengthening pathways to post-completion success and delivering value for students and communities:

- 1) Ensuring programs lead to good jobs and further education in high-opportunity fields
- 2) Teaching students versatile skills to thrive in careers and further education
- 3) Creating a more engaging recruitment and program onboarding experience
- 4) Helping students complete their programs on schedule and affordably
- 5) Creating on-ramps to college and career opportunity for high school dual enrollment students.

This assessment is designed for colleges to assess the extent to which they have implemented at scale (that is, for all students and across all programs) practices in each of the five pathways frontiers that CCRC research indicates are key to improving student outcomes.

Who should complete the assessment, and how long will it take?

We suggest that the group of individuals responsible for leading student success initiatives at your college complete the self-assessment as a group. We estimate that this will take about 60-90 minutes.

How should we use the results?

Colleges should use the results of the assessment to identify priority areas for strengthening student pathways and to formatively evaluate efforts over time to strengthen college practices, systems and culture in ways that enrich students' experience and lead to improved outcomes. CCRC has developed a [free guide](#) for use in leading discussions among faculty, and outside partners on how to strengthen practice in the five frontiers described in *More Essential Than Ever*.

Who should we contact if we have questions?

If you have any questions about this assessment, please contact Davis Jenkins (pdj2102@tc.columbia.edu) or Hana Lahr (lahr@tc.columbia.edu) at CCRC. Thank you!

College Name:

List of persons (including their titles) involved in filling out the survey:

Date completed:

1. Ensuring Programs Lead to Good Jobs and Further Education

Aligning workforce programs to good jobs

1.1 What percentage of credit workforce programs provide information on the college's website on employment outcomes, earnings, job demand, and typical occupations associated with program completion?

- A. At least 80%
- B. At least half, but less than 80%
- C. Some, but less than half
- D. None, or close to none
- E. Not sure

Please include a link to the college website where this information on workforce programs can be found:

1.2 What percentage of credit workforce programs provide information on the college website on program and course requirements and recommended course sequences?

- A. At least 80%
- B. At least half, but less than 80%
- C. Some, but less than half
- D. None, or close to none
- E. Not sure

1.3 What percentage of credit workforce associate (and where relevant, bachelor's) programs include embedded certificates?

- A. At least 80%
- B. At least half, but less than 80%
- C. Some, but less than half
- D. None, or close to none
- E. Not sure

1.4 What percentage of credit workforce programs are formally reviewed using labor market demand, employment outcomes, and earnings data to assess whether they lead to living-wage jobs in demand in the college's service area?

- A. At least 80%
- B. At least half, but less than 80%
- C. Some, but less than half
- D. None, or close to none
- E. Not sure

1.5 What data sources are used in reviewing credit workforce programs? Select all that apply.

- A. Labor market demand data (from Burning Glass/Lightcast or other sources)
- B. State system reports on employment outcomes for your college
- C. College Scorecard
- D. Graduate surveys
- E. Graduate focus groups
- F. Employer surveys
- G. Employer advising boards
- H. Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records analysis
- I. Other:
- J. College does not regularly review workforce programs

Aligning transfer pathways to bachelor's degrees

1.6 What percentage of transfer programs provide information on the college's website on program and course requirements and recommended course sequences for transfer to bachelor's programs at specific destination institutions and in specific majors (e.g., management, marketing, criminal justice, public health, and cybersecurity)?

- A. At least 80%
- B. At least half, but less than 80%
- C. Some, but less than half
- D. None, or close to none
- E. Not sure

1.7 How often is transfer program information on the college's website updated to reflect curricular changes by university bachelor's programs?

- A. Every year
- B. Every other year
- C. Other:
- D. College does not provide major-specific transfer program maps on the website

- 1.8 What percentage of transfer-intending students are enrolled in pre-major transfer pathways rather than general or liberal studies tracks?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 1.9 What percentage of transfer programs are regularly reviewed using data on transfer rates, bachelor's completion rates, and post-transfer outcomes?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not implemented
- 1.10 What data are used to review transfer program outcomes? Select all that apply.
- A. National Student Clearinghouse enrollment and completion data matched to student records
 - B. State system reports on transfer outcomes for your college
 - C. Reports or other information from partner universities
 - D. Graduate surveys
 - E. Graduate focus groups
 - F. Other:
 - G. College does not regularly review transfer program outcomes

2. Teaching Students Versatile Skills to Thrive in Careers and Further Education

Versatile or transferable skills

- 2.1 What percentage of programs formally assess students' attainment of durable skills such as communication, quantitative reasoning, and problem-solving as part of program review?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

Math redesign

- 2.2 What percentage of credit program students (not including high school dual enrollment) take math courses explicitly aligned with their program of study (as opposed to being defaulted into college algebra or leaving it to the student to decide)?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 2.3 What percentage of credit students (not including high school dual enrollment students) who are deemed to need remediation or academic support in math are placed in an accelerated math course with embedded academic support as opposed to a stand-alone prerequisite developmental education course?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 2.4 If the college still offers prerequisite developmental education courses, how many levels of developmental math are students still placed into?
- 2.5 In what percentage of gateway college-level math courses have instructional methods been substantially redesigned to improve engagement, learning, and student success?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

Program foundation course redesign

- 2.6 In the past five years, have there been formal academic department-, division-, or college-wide efforts to redesign program gateway courses to improve student engagement, learning and success other than in math and English composition (such as Anatomy & Physiology, Accounting 101 and 102, Biology and Chemistry 101)?
- A. Yes
 - B. No

If yes, what courses have been redesigned?

Briefly describe examples of how courses were redesigned:

Work-based and other experiential learning

2.7 Does the college have dedicated staff responsible for developing and managing experiential learning opportunities (such as internships, co-ops, job shadowing, and service learning) for students?

- A. Yes
- B. No

If yes, indicate how many FTE staff members manage experiential learning and briefly summarize their roles.

2.8 What percentage of students in **credit workforce programs** (not including dual enrollment) participate in internships, co-ops, service-learning, or other structured experiential learning for which they receive credit in their programs?

- A. At least 80%
- B. At least half, but less than 80%
- C. Some, but less than half
- D. None, or close to none
- E. Not sure

2.9 What percentage of students in **transfer program tracks** (not including dual enrollment) participate in internships, co-ops, service learning, or other structured experiential learning for which they receive credit in their programs?

- A. At least 80%
- B. At least half, but less than 80%
- C. Some, but less than half
- D. None, or close to none
- E. Not sure

Faculty professional development

- 2.10 Are there regular, formal academic department-, division-, or college-wide processes whereby faculty convene at least once a year to assess student learning and plan improvements to teaching and learning?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. For some programs, but not all
- 2.11 In the past three years, what percentage of full-time faculty have participated in formal training or professional development on effective teaching practices (such as ACUE, Quality Matters, or other training organized by the college)?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 2.12 How frequently are part-time faculty compensated (e.g., through stipends) to participate in faculty training and professional development activities?
- A. Usually
 - B. Sometimes
 - C. Rarely or never
- 2.13 What percentage of online instructors are required to complete formal training in effective online teaching?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. Less than 80%, but at least half
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

3. Creating a More Engaging Program Onboarding Experience

Career and academic exploration

- 3.1 Which of the following supports are provided to new credit-program students (not including high school dual enrollment) to help them explore career and academic interests and choose a program of study? Select all that apply.
- A. Mandatory orientation
 - B. Mandatory orientation with career and academic field exploration content
 - C. Mandatory career assessment
 - D. Mandatory first-year experience course
 - E. Mandatory first-year experience course with career and academic field exploration content
 - F. Field-specific events or activities organized by academic field/area
 - G. Other:
- 3.2 What percentage of first-time-college-students (not including high school dual enrollment students) take at least one course in a field of interest (other than math, English, or a first-year experience course) in their first term?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

Educational planning

- 3.3 What percentage of first-time at the college credit program students (not including high school dual enrollment students) are helped to develop a full-program educational plan by the end of their first term?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 3.4 Can students see their educational plans online and determine which courses they have already taken and which they need to take to complete their programs?
- A. Yes
 - B. No

- 3.5 What percentage of students seeking admission to selective healthcare programs are helped to develop an alternate program plan leading to credentials and jobs in healthcare or related fields in case they are not accepted into their first-choice program?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

4. Helping Students Complete Their Programs on Schedule and Affordably

Ongoing student advising and progress monitoring

- 4.1 Which of the following are in place to support the monitoring of students' progress in their programs? Select all that apply.
- A. Mandatory advising, first term
 - B. Mandatory advising, subsequent terms (advisors must sign off before students can register)
 - C. Mandatory checkpoint advising (required appointments with advisors at key progress milestones)
 - D. Automatic registration alerts (to notify when students have registered for courses not on their educational plan)
 - E. Automatic or manual alerts for students struggling in their courses
 - F. Other:
- 4.2 What percentage of students (not including dual enrollment students) are assigned to a specific advisor (caseload advising)?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 4.3 Are students assigned to an advisor in their meta-major or field of study?
- A. Yes
 - B. Yes, except in special populations (TRIO, athletes, veterans, international students).
 - C. For some, but not all programs
 - D. Students are assigned to an advisor in another systematic way (e.g., alphabetically)
 - E. Students are not assigned to a specific advisor

Advising on the cost of college attendance

- 4.4 What percentage of new students (not including dual enrollment students) receive information showing the estimated total cost required to complete their program?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 4.5 What percentage of students are helped to develop a financial plan for paying for the costs of completing their program?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

Class scheduling and design for on-time completion

- 4.6 What scheduling reforms has your college implemented or is your college in the process of implementing? Select all that apply.
- A. Registration tied to students' educational plans
 - B. Class schedules based on analysis of students' educational plans
 - C. Year-long (rolling) registration
 - D. Class schedules released 1+ year in advance
 - E. Block scheduling
 - F. Inter-term courses (e.g., "mini-mesters")
 - G. Late-start classes
 - H. Reduced tuition or other incentives for summer term course-taking
 - I. Shortened academic terms (e.g., 7- or 8-week terms)
 - J. Other:
 - K. Our college has not implemented any major scheduling reforms
- 4.7 What percentage of credit programs (not including dual enrollment) are offered in compressed (e.g. 7- or 8-week) terms?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

5. Creating Postsecondary On-Ramps for High School Dual Enrollment Students

Expanding access

- 5.1 Considering all potential expenses for students to participate in dual enrollment (e.g., tuition, fees, books, transportation, etc.), what percentage of your college's dual enrollment (DE) students can participate in DE for free this academic year?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 5.2 Which of the following were used in the current or most recent academic year to reach out and encourage DE participation among students from groups underrepresented in these programs? Select all that apply.
- A. Outreach directly to parents and families from underrepresented communities to build awareness about DE opportunities
 - B. Outreach to community-based organizations (e.g., religious or civic organizations) to promote DE
 - C. Outreach to middle school students and families to build early awareness about DE
 - D. Outreach to Title I (i.e., primarily low-income) or other high schools with larger numbers of underrepresented students (e.g., rural schools, primarily minority-serving schools) to promote and expand DE offerings
 - E. Use of multilingual promotional materials for DE
 - F. Other:

Alignment to postsecondary bachelor's and career-technical pathways

- 5.3 Does the college provide information on its website on how DE courses map to specific career-technical programs offered by the college?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. For some, but not all DE offerings

- 5.4 Does the college provide information on its website on how DE courses map to field- or major-specific transfer pathways offered by the college (as opposed to just AA in Liberal or General Studies)?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. For some, but not all DE offerings

College-provided advising and planning assistance

- 5.5 In what percentage of dual enrollment partner high schools are college advisors providing at least monthly advising to dual enrollment students?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure
- 5.6 Which of the following college advising components are in place for DE students? Select all that apply.
- A. College advising provided as requested by DE students or high school partners
 - B. Mandatory college-provided advising before the first term of DE coursework (e.g., registration advising)
 - C. Mandatory college-provided advising by the end of the first term of DE coursework
 - D. Mandatory college-provided advising at least once a year for DE students
 - E. Mandatory college-provided checkpoint advising for DE students (appointments at key milestones, such as when students complete 15 or 30 semester credit hours)
 - F. College-provided caseload advising (each DE student is assigned to a specific advisor)
 - G. Mandatory student success course for DE students that includes college advising
 - H. None of the above
 - I. Other:
- 5.7 What percentage of current dual enrollment students meet with a college advisor at least once each term that they are taking DE classes?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

- 5.8 What percentage of current dual enrollment students are helped to develop a college program plan (individualized plan showing what coursework is needed to complete postsecondary program requirements)?
- A. At least 80%
 - B. At least half, but less than 80%
 - C. Some, but less than half
 - D. None, or close to none
 - E. Not sure

High-quality instruction and academic support

- 5.9 Which of the following DE quality-assurance practices does the college use for its high-school-based DE course sections? Select all that apply.
- A. Course sections taught at the high school to DE students use the same course materials, syllabi, and assessments as other sections of the same course taught at the college to post-high-school students.
 - B. All new high school instructors of DE courses are provided course-specific training (e.g., curriculum, pedagogy, assessment) by college faculty prior to the instructor teaching the course.
 - C. College administrators or faculty conduct site visits to observe new high school instructors of DE courses during their first year of teaching DE.
 - D. At least once every three years, college administrators or faculty evaluate at least some graded assignments (e.g., final papers) from DE courses taught by high school instructors for equivalency.
 - E. At least once every three years, college administrators or faculty conduct site visits to observe continuing high school instructors of DE courses
 - F. At least once per year, high school instructors of DE courses participate in required college-provided professional development with discipline-specific content.
 - G. Few if any dual enrollment courses offered by our college are taught by qualified high school teachers.

5.10 Which of the following are used to provide instructional and other academic support for students taking DE coursework? Select all that apply.

- A. College academic support services (e.g., tutoring, writing centers) are available to DE students.
- B. College has a process for systematically identifying DE students who are struggling in their coursework (e.g., early alerts).
- C. College has a system for providing additional supports for DE students identified as struggling academically in their coursework (e.g., proactive outreach and academic intervention).
- D. College enrolls first-time DE students in courses that historically have higher success rates in order to facilitate the transition to college-level course expectations.
- E. Information about college-level expectations (e.g., how DE courses differ from other high school courses) and advice for success in DE coursework are communicated to new DE students and their families to prepare students for success in their DE coursework.
- F. College provides additional instructional and academic supports for new DE students (e.g., heightened focus on identifying and supporting struggling students early on in their first DE course) to ensure students are acclimated and successful in their first DE courses.