IS THE STUDENT SUCCESS AGENDA SUCCEEDING?

WESTERN ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC LEADERS

APRIL 2013
RECLAIMING THE AMERICAN DREAM

Community Colleges and the Nation’s Future

Report from the 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges
“The American Dream is at risk… Community colleges can help reclaim that dream.

But stepping up to the challenge will require dramatic redesign of these institutions, their missions, and, most critically, their students’ educational experiences.”
LEADERSHIP FOR WHAT?

• For student success
• For college completion
• For reclaiming the American Dream
Recommendation #1

Increase completion rates of community college credentials (certificates and associate degrees) by 50% by 2020, while preserving access, enhancing quality, and eradicating attainment gaps associated with income, race, ethnicity, and gender.
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Construct coherent, structured pathways to certificate and degree completion.

This strategy should aim to:

- incorporate high-impact, evidence-based educational practices;
- integrate student support with instruction;
- promote implementation at scale;
- rigorously evaluate effectiveness of programs and services for students; and
- courageously end ineffective approaches.
REDESIGN STUDENTS’ EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Recommendation #2

*Drastically improve college readiness: By 2020...*

double the number of students who complete developmental education programs and progress to successful completion of related freshman-level courses.
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Redesign developmental education fundamentally, creating new evidence-based pathways that accelerate students’ progress toward successful college-level work.

Construct coherent, structured pathways to certificate and degree completion.

Incorporate design principles emerging from community college research and practice:
- Acceleration
- Contextualization
- Active, collaborative learning
- Integrated student and academic support
THE NEED FOR REDESIGN

Or, to answer the question:

No, we’re not yet succeeding…

…but we’re making some progress
Students’ Goals

On the SENSE survey, entering students say…

79% want to obtain an associate degree.

73% want to transfer to a four-year institution.

59% want to complete a certificate program.
Percent of new students responding to the SENSE survey who report they are committed to doing whatever it takes to succeed in college:

90%
Percent of new students responding to the SENSE survey who believe they arrived at college academically prepared to succeed.

85%
10% of students placing in developmental math 3 levels below college level who complete the math sequence and successfully complete a college-level math class within 6 years. [NCPR, 2011]
75% of new students responding to the SENSE survey who learned that they do not have the skills in reading, writing, and/or math that are requisite to success in college-level courses.
~15%…do not complete a credit in their first term.
46%

...drop out by the start of their second year.
Only 45% …have completed a certificate or degree, transferred, or are still enrolled after 6 years.
Learning from Listening
Listening Systematically to Students

– The Center has conducted focus groups with students (120 and counting)—as well as with faculty and staff—at multiple community colleges every year since 2002.

– Current emphases: entering students, high school-to-college transitions, longitudinal studies, men of color, high-impact educational practices, part-time faculty
CCSSE: Community College Survey of Student Engagement

Cumulatively, CCSSE has surveyed almost two million students (representing over 6 million) from 869 different community colleges in 50 states, DC, Bermuda, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, Nova Scotia, the Northern Marianas, and the Marshall Islands.
Cumulatively, SENSE has surveyed almost 300,000 students (representing 2.2 million) from 273 different community colleges in 41 states, plus DC, Nova Scotia, the Northern Marianas, and the Marshall Islands.
What we know for sure about student engagement in community colleges:

It’s unlikely to happen by accident. It has to happen by design.
Students Speak—Are We Listening?

Bringing data alive through student voices…

Book and DVD available from AACC Online Bookstore
http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Publications/Pages/Product.aspx?Product_Id=436679
What did you hear?

- About “front door” experiences?
- About learning and teaching?
- About academic and student support?
- About what makes a difference for students?
Learning about High-Impact Practices
## Center for Community College Student Engagement:

### IDENTIFYING AND PROMOTING HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE),</th>
<th>Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE),</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• administered during the 4th and 5th weeks of the fall term</td>
<td>• administered in the spring term</td>
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<tr>
<td>• focuses on students’ experiences from the time they decide to attend through the end of the first three weeks of the term</td>
<td>• gathers information from students about their overall experiences at the college</td>
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<tr>
<th>Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (CCFSSE),</th>
<th>Community College Institutional Survey (CCIS),</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• administered in conjunction with CCSSE to all faculty teaching credit courses</td>
<td>• collects information on identifying and promoting high-impact educational practices in community colleges</td>
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<tr>
<td>• gathers information on instructors’ perceptions of student experiences and about teaching practices and use of professional time</td>
<td>• gathers information about whether and how colleges implement a variety of promising practices</td>
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Assessment and Placement

74% of entering students report that they were required to take a placement test.

28% of students report using materials provided by college to help prepare for the assessment test.

44% of colleges report offering some form of assessment test preparation, but just 13% make test preparation mandatory. (2011 CCIS Data)

Data Disconnect?
Could more students test up or out of developmental education?
## Orientation

Colleges *offering* orientation: 93%

Entering students who *attended* an on-campus orientation prior to the beginning of classes: 45%

Entering students *were not aware* of a college orientation: 19%

Colleges reporting they *require* ALL first-time students to participate in orientation: 38%

## Data Disconnect?

*Does orientation matter?*
Preliminary High-Impact Analysis: Orientation Increases Student Engagement!

Source: 2011 CCSSE data
What entering community college students are telling us:

Most important service?

→ Advising and academic planning
45%

…say they never saw an advisor prior to the end of their first three weeks in class.
What entering community college students are telling us:

27%...enrolled in a class designed to teach them the skills needed to succeed in college.
What entering community college students are telling us:

*Students don’t do optional!*

*(Are we listening?)*
Accelerated/Fast-Track Developmental Ed

42% of colleges report offering accelerated or fast-track developmental education programs.

26% of developmental students report enrolling in accelerated or fast-track developmental courses.

Data Disconnect?

Could more students not only test up or out of developmental education, but also move through developmental education more quickly?
Student Success Courses

83% of colleges report offering student success courses and 15% make them mandatory for all first-time students.

27% of entering students report enrolling in a student success course.

Learning Communities

56% of colleges report offering learning communities, but just 1% make them mandatory for all first-time students.

13% of students report enrolling in an organized learning community.
Working with Academically Underprepared Students

~2/3 of entering students need at least one course in developmental education. YET…

80% of CCSSE respondents report never using college tutoring services.

81% say they never participate in supplemental instruction.

55% report they never participate in required group learning experiences.

53% say “no” when asked if someone at the college contacts them when they are struggling with their studies.

Data Disconnect?
Are students getting the academic support they need to succeed?
What Matters Most for Student Success?
It’s Not Just About Having the Most Innovations

The effectiveness of educational practice depends on…

- Aligning what colleges “provide” with what students need
- Moving from providing to requiring
- Quality of implementation
- Scale
Design Principles for Effective Practice

- A strong start
- Clear, coherent pathways
- Integrated support
- High expectations and high support
- Contextualization
- Intensive student engagement
- Design for scale
- Professional development
Some Observations

• Every college is perfectly designed to produce precisely the results it’s currently getting.
• We can’t get better at what we’re not willing to look at. Data and evidence matter.
• Effective leadership is a team sport.
• Institutions can get better; but first they have to decide to do it.
• And transformational change requires relentless focus over a sustained period of time.
HARD CHOICES: Leadership Challenges

- Whom are community colleges going to serve?
- What are the colleges’ priorities?
- What outcomes will they seek?
- To whom and to what missions or programs will they say "No"? Or, "Sorry, but not any longer"?
- How will limited resources be reallocated to bring effective educational practices to scale?
HARD CHOICES: Leadership Challenges

- What academic programs or student services will be eliminated?
- How will colleges ensure equity in educational outcomes?
- How will faculty associations and other constituencies lead and contribute to the redesign of the educational experiences of students?
HARD CHOICES: Leadership Challenges

- How will adjunct faculty be fully prepared for and fully involved in the work ahead?
- How will college leaders at all levels ensure that institutions engage in the courageous conversations that must provide answers to these questions?
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