The Voluntary Framework of Accountability

for community colleges, by community colleges
The Voluntary Framework of Accountability is the first national system of accountability specifically *FOR and BY* community colleges.
EXISTING MEASUREMENTS

» Plethora of reporting and accountability models but…existing measurements are limited

» Graduation rate not the right tool for measuring community college success

» Existing measures do not capture value of full range of community college offerings, like noncredit courses or CTE

» Despite importance to U.S. economy, community colleges lack comprehensive way to tell our story
Why, oh why, oh why?

• Based on federal data collection, what is the community college completion rate?
  - A: 20%  3-year rate
  - B: 33%  4-year rate
  - C: 42%  3-year rate inclusive of transfer
  - D: All of the Above
Why, oh why, oh why?

- Even with the 3 ways to define completion, what percentage of our students does this measure?
  - Answer: About 30%
National climate and completion agenda or straight to measures.
We urge the creation of a robust culture of accountability and transparency throughout higher education. Every one of our goals, from improving access and affordability to enhancing quality and innovation, will be more easily achieved if higher education institutions embrace and implement serious accountability measures.”

Source: A Test of Leadership: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education
A Report of the Commission Appointed by Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings
“By 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world... So tonight I ask every American to commit to at least one year or more of higher education or career training... every American will need to get more than a high school diploma.”

-President Barack Obama
Address to Joint Session of Congress
February 24, 2009
The VFA is composed of measures in 3 broad areas:

- Student Progress and Outcomes
- CTE (Career and Technical Education)
- ABE (Adult Basic Education)
Enter VFA: More Appropriate Measures
Where are we now?

» The VFA Data Tool
The first comprehensive national accountability system created by community colleges, for community colleges
Where are we now?

» Beta Testing and Live Launch

» Transition to “AACC Owned and Operated”
The paradox of Open access institutions

“Preparation for college is not critical versus matriculation is”

The Role of Academic Pathways

• **Creation of Boundary Spanning**
  » Organizational structures
  » Technology (student cloud)
  » Curricula
  » Entrance and Exit points
  » Instructional Approaches

• **Conclusion: The future**
  » Viability of Academic Pathways.
  » What could the Student Academic pathway look like (GPS)
GPR Requirements
Cumulative GPA: 2.00 / 3.58 [Completed]
Nursing GPA: 2.00 / 3.40 [Completed]

Credit Requirements
Total Earned Credits: 124.00 / 220.00 [Incomplete]
In-Progress Credits: 12.00 [In-Progress]

Additional Credit Requirements
Earning Manoa Credits: 80.00 / 186.00 [Incomplete]
Transfer Credits: 35.00 [Completed]
Non Intro (NI) / Upper Division (UD)
Earning NI Credits: 59.00 / 127.00 [Incomplete]
In-Progress NI Credits: 12.00 [In-Progress]

Focus Requirements
Total WI: 5 / 6 [Completed]
Upper Division WI: 35.00 [Incomplete]
Non Nursing WI: 2 / 6 [Completed]
HAP: 1 / 1 [Completed]
Ethical Issues: 1 / 2 [Completed]
Oral Communication: 1 / 2 [Completed]

Written Communication (FWI)
Sum 2006: WRITTEN COMM ENG 100 CR 3.00 U of Hawaii [Complete]

Symbolic Reasoning (FS)
Sum 2004: SYMBOLIC R MATH 140 CR 3.00 U of Hawaii [Complete]

Global & Multicultural Perspectives (FG)
Sum 2003: GLOBAL-GRO HIST 152 CR 3.00 U of Hawaii [Complete]
Fall 2005: GLOBAL-GRO REL 150 B 3.00 Manoa [Complete]

Diversification - Art, Hum & Lit (DA, DH, DL)
Sum 2006: DVI-DA SP 251 A 3.00 Manoa [Complete]
Fall 2006: DVI-DA EALL 271 D 3.00 Manoa [Complete]

Diversification - Social Sciences (DS)
Fall 2006: DS-LING LING 100 A 3.00 Manoa [Complete]
Spring 2005: DS-PSY PSY 100 CR 3.00 Advanced P [Complete]

Natural Sciences
Summer 2010: PHYSIOLOGY PHY 141 CR 3.00 U of Hawaii [Incomplete]
Fall 2010: PHYSIOLOGY PHY 142 CR 3.00 U of Hawaii [Incomplete]
Spring 2011: PHYSIOLOGY PHY 241 CR 3.00 U of Hawaii [Incomplete]
Fall 2005: DVI-DA CHEU 151 A 3.00 Manoa [Complete]
Spring 2006: UCR CHEU 151 A 3.00 Manoa [Complete]
Fall 2010: MCR CHEU 151 A 3.00 Manoa [Incomplete]

Pharmacology 203
Fall 2011: PHMK 203 PHMK E01 CR 3.00 U of Hawaii [Complete]

Statistical Analysis
Summer 2007: STATISTICS BUS 310 A 3.00 Manoa [Complete]

Major: Nursing (Fall 2010)
The nursing curriculum is sequential and any changes in the sequence must be approved by the Dept Chair. A minimum grade of C (not C-) is required in all courses.

The student has completed 49.00 total credits of this program's required 74.00 total credits.

First Semester
Spring 2011: FIRST SEM NURS 210 A 4.00 Manoa [Complete]
Spring 2011: FIRST SEM NURS 211 A 1.00 Manoa [Complete]
Spring 2011: FIRST SEM NURS 212 A 3.00 Manoa [Complete]

Second Semester
Fall 2011: SECOND QCM NURS 220 D 10.00 Manoa [Complete]

Third Semester
Fall 2012: THIRD SEM NURS 320 B 10.00 Manoa [Complete]

Fourth Semester

Advisor Notes
There are currently no advisor notes for this student at Manoa.

Events and Actions
- Recruited by Manoa Fall 2005 Undergraduate Bachelor of Arts FEB-15-2006-MAN
- Applied to Manoa Fall 2005 Standard Undergraduate BA General (Pre-Social Work) DEC-30-2004-BAN
- Fall 2005 Manoa Undergraduate <Addl Credits for Language Completion of JPN 102> <Refer to Transfer Credit Accepted by Institution>
- Study Abroad From Aug 20 2007 12:00AM to May 18 2008 12:00AM
- Applied to Manoa Fall 2010 Standard Graduate MS Nursing APR-01-2010-BAN
- Applied to Manoa Spring 2011 Standard Undergraduate BS Nursing NOV-24-2010-BAN
- Fall 2009 Manoa Undergraduate Degree Confirmed 12/19/09

Actions
- Spring 2011 Manoa Dean's List
- Fall 2009 Manoa Graduation
- Fall 2009 Manoa Dean's List
- Spring 2009 Manoa Dean's List
- Fall 2007 Manoa Dean's List
- Spring 2007 Manoa Dean's List
- Fall 2006 Manoa Dean's List
### Credit Requirements

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>124.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>102.00</td>
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### Additional Credit Requirements

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### Focus Requirements

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### Credit Restrictions

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### Non Intro (NI) / Upper Division (UD)

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92.00</td>
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### Global & Multicultural Perspectives (FG)

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### Diversification - Art, Hum & Lit (DA, DH, DL)

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### Diversification - Natural Sciences (DB, DP, DV)

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### Diversification - Social Sciences (DS)

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### Breadth - Languages, Linguistics and Literature

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### Breadth - Arts & Humanities

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### Major: English (Fall 2009)

The minimum course grade to fulfill major requirements is a C (not C). These requirements must be taken for a letter grade, unless the course is offered only with the CRNRG grade option.

### 300 Level courses

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**Has been at 100% for four semesters.**

**You will notice there is no projection for this student as they are already complete.**

The student received an AA and then transferred. However, when they came to the four year they were only 41% complete. Ideally, they would have been at 50%.
A requirement can be complete/incomplete/tentatively complete. This is essential as you need to know where a student stands assuming they pass the in-progress courses.

In addition to requirements, STAR can also include preliminary/pre-req courses to illustrate that the student is taking a valid path.

This student is taking a Honolulu Community College course and it is being articulated in real time back to their home campus of Hawaii CC even though the course is in progress.
You can choose to meet your requirements by taking courses at other campuses that articulate back to your home campus to meet the requirement, you can see where it is taught as an online course as well.
The paradox of Open access institutions

First-Time Full-Time Freshmen
Retention Rate by STAR Usage (logins per student per semester)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAR logins per student per semester</th>
<th>Retention Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 5 logins</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 20</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 30</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;30</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Avg. Retention % (.77)
The paradox of Open access institutions

Fall 2009, 2010 First-Time Full-Time Freshmen with Pell Grant Retention Rates by STAR Usage

Average Retention Rate

Number of STAR Logins

- "0-5"
- "6-10"
- "11-20"
- "21-30"
- ">30"
The paradox of Open access institutions

3-Year Graduation Rate

- 2008: 18.5%
- 2009: 25.4%
- 2010: 20.6%
- 2011: 24.2%
Measuring and researching success

Applied Inquiry Framework

Eva Schiorring
WICHE Panelist
April 3, 2013
10 year trend for institutional outcomes

Retention Rate

Success Rate

WICHE: Measuring and Researching Success
Successful research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High technical quality</td>
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</table>
# Successful research

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Attributes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High technical quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
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WICHE: Measuring and Researching Success
## Successful research

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High technical quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Use of Research

- Instrumental
- Conceptual
- Tactical
- Imposed

Use of Research

- Instrumental
- Conceptual
- Tactical
- Imposed

## Requirements for successful research

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Requirements</th>
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<td>High technical quality</td>
<td>Strong technical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used</td>
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</table>
Requirements for successful research

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High technical quality</td>
<td>Strong technical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>Deep understanding of issues/priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Requirements for successful research

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High technical quality</td>
<td>Strong technical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>Deep understanding of issues/priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Used</strong></td>
<td><strong>Practitioner engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Determine what evidence will help answer the questions

Collaboratively explore research questions

Research Request

Explore action steps

Conduct research & analysis

Dialog to interpret results

Act on findings & evaluate results

Applied Inquiry Framework
Applied inquiry framework in action

- **CTE Employment Outcomes Survey and CTE Launchboard**
  - Pain point: Practitioners cannot document full range of outcomes; can’t speak to the employability of their students
  - Practitioners and researchers collaborate to identify evidence that will address the employability questions – result:
    - CTE Employment Outcomes survey
    - Launchboard (dashboard of metrics requested by practitioners and aligned with accountability measures)
  - Implementation of Outcomes Survey at 35 colleges
  - Analysis of data (39% increase in hourly wages among completers)
  - Conversations about the findings and Launchboard pilot
  - Findings support evidence-based adjustments/changes
Building Evidence for What Works (and What Doesn’t) to Improve Student Outcomes in Community Colleges

Mary Visher
Senior Associate

Western Alliance of Community College Academic Leaders Conference
San Francisco, California
April 3, 2013
Presentation Outline

1) Why college completion matters and key barriers to success

2) Brief overview of MDRC’s portfolio of evaluations with a closer look at two studies

3) Thoughts on evaluation
Why College Attendance and Completion Matters

Unemployment rate in 2010

- Bachelor’s degree or higher: 4.7%
- Some college or associates degree: 8.4%
- High school graduate: 10.3%
- Less than a high school diploma: 14.9%

Median weekly earnings in 2010

- Bachelor’s degree or higher: $1,144
- Some college or associates degree: $794
- High school graduate: $626
- Less than a high school diploma: $444

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics
Fall Enrollment in Two- and Four-Year Colleges and Universities (1963-2005)

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics
Transfer to 4-year
Some Explanations for Low Completion Rates

Student Factors:
- Academically underprepared
- Not sufficiently informed, motivated or directed
- Unable to pay for college
- Competing work or family obligations

Institutional Factors:
- Instruction for students in need of basic skills is weak
- Advising and support services are inadequate
- Financial aid leaves gaps/does not incentivize completion
- College culture is not focused on completion
## Current Portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Education</th>
<th>Financial Aid</th>
<th>Student Supports</th>
<th>Comprehensive Reforms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Learning Communities</td>
<td>• Performance-Based Scholarships – Louisiana and Other Sites</td>
<td>• Intensive Advising</td>
<td>• Achieving the Dream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Summer Bridge</td>
<td>• Dreamkeepers Emergency Financial Aid</td>
<td>• Student Success Course</td>
<td>• Completion by Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developmental Education Initiative</td>
<td>• Aid Like A Paycheck</td>
<td>• Classroom Mentoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New Mathways Project</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Student Support Partnership Integrating Resources and Education (SSPIRE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dev Ed Acceleration Case Study</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identify students who fit into the defined target group

Invite to participate in study

Informed consent received

Baseline data collected

Gift certificate distributed

Random assignment

Assigned to program

Assigned to control group
Learning Communities Demonstration

- Popular strategy for reforming developmental education
  - Two or more “linked” courses, which students take together as a group
  - Intervention lasts one semester

- Underlying theory:
  - Build social support among students
  - Integrated assignments help students master content

- LC Demo: Randomized experiments at 6 community colleges across the country
  - Models ranged from “basic” to “advanced”
Positive Progress through Developmental Sequence

Percent Pass Dev Ed Course in LC Link (Program Semester)

* p ≤ .10  ** p ≤ .05  *** p ≤ .01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Control</th>
<th>Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>36.5%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough Reading</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Math</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QCC Math</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merced English</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCBC English</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
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Little Evidence of Cumulative Credit Accumulation

Total Credits Earned (Cumulative)

* $p \leq .10$  ** $p \leq .05$  *** $p \leq .01$

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<tr>
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<th>Control</th>
<th>Program</th>
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<td>16.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCBC</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
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</table>

KCC(OD): 4 Semesters
Hillsborough: 2 Semesters
Houston: 2 Semesters
QCC: 3 Semesters
Merced: 2 Semesters
CCBC: 2 Semesters
Overarching Lessons About Evaluation

- Most short-term interventions lead to short-term impacts.

- Evaluation can help target limited resources.

- Learning what works is as valuable as learning what doesn’t.

- Evaluations can start useful conversations among (and between) policy makers and practitioners.
FOR MORE INFORMATION...

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Mary.Visher@mdrc.org  

All reports are free and downloadable from  
www.mdrc.org