



Pathways

PATHWAYS COACHING GUIDE

IMPLEMENTATION

CLARIFY THE PATHS

Mapping all Programs of Study

The program mapping process, central to the implementation of guided pathways at scale, involves creating a coherent sequence of courses that a student will move through to complete a program. Maps will indicate term-by-term course schedules, and faculty will ensure that course-level student learning outcomes are clear and aligned through the sequence, accruing ultimately to program-level learning outcomes.

Colleges should be encouraged to begin their guided pathways journey with the program mapping process, **starting with the end in mind**, whether that is direct employment following completion of a credential or transfer with junior level standing in the major. Colleges should establish mapping teams with a timeline for completion of maps, inclusive of an internal review process before the maps are finalized.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS








- ▶ To learn from colleges that have undertaken program mapping, ask this question: What do you know now that you wish you had known when you launched this work?
- ▶ As a pathways coach, what would be your advice to a college that has mapped all of its programs through the efforts of a small working group but without broad faculty engagement? Concretely, how might a coach recommend the college organize broad engagement in the work?
- ▶ What specific kinds of roadblocks and resistance should colleges expect as they undertake and progress through this mapping work? What proactive steps can they take to address those issues?
- ▶ Once programs are mapped, how can coaches effectively guide colleges to the next-level work on fleshing out pathways (choosing the right math, recommending core curriculum courses and electives, integrating discipline-appropriate academic supports, etc.)?

🗨️ OBSERVATIONS FROM PATHWAYS COACHES

- 💬 Reinforce the importance of building clear articulation with the college's 3-4 best transfer partners and then aligning the mapping to that articulation. Yes, there are multiple transfer institutions, but most colleges will find that 75-80% of their transfers go to the four institutions. Make sure that the college gets the biggest possible impact with the efforts they dedicate to mapping. ★ *Ed Bowling*


- One potentially unanticipated challenge in engaging faculty in mapping programs of study is recognizing that faculty members typically are more course-focused than program-focused...It is important to put program-level data and outcomes in front of faculty routinely and ask them to identify ways to streamline delivery of programs for both full- and part-time students. Even giving credence to the reality that students do not always do what is prescribed for them, faculty need to become more engaged with how to think more broadly than THEIR course(s) and THEIR discipline(s). One method of approaching the program mapping process is to do a retrospective look at how courses have actually been delivered over the past several years. What courses were cancelled due to low enrollment or other reasons? What courses were never scheduled? Where are the gaps between what students need to complete a program and what was actually delivered? If there are discrepancies between the program requirements and program delivery, it is a good place to begin looking at the program of study and addressing its requirements first. Once that step has been accomplished, there is a clearer path to discussing alternatives for how the program should be delivered for both full- and part-time students. Do not make the assumption that just because a course is in a program of study that it has been delivered in a consistent manner that supports completion. ★ *Donna Dare*

Print Resources

-  [Mapping Action Plan Template](#) (American Association of Community Colleges)
Note: Click the link and a .docx file will automatically download.
-  [Transfer and Employment Program Mapping Template from AACC Institute 5](#)
Note: Click the link and a .docx file will automatically download.
-  [Program Map from Broward College \(FL\)](#)
-  [Program Map from Cleveland State Community College \(TN\)](#)
-  [Program Map from Lorain County Community College \(OH\)](#)
-  [Program Map from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College \(WI\)](#)
-  [Program Map from Pierce College District \(WA\)](#)

Video

View videos associated with:

-  [Course sequences, critical courses, embedded credentials, and progress milestones](#)

IMPLEMENTATION

HELP STUDENTS GET ON A PATH

Required Supports to Ensure Students Get the Best Start

Pathways colleges will need to redesign the intake process for students, connecting them early to career exploration and related programs of study. The goals are to help students get connected to a chosen program of study as soon as possible and to ensure that every student has a full program plan by the end of the first academic term. There has been much success with case management approaches to advising, through which students are assigned to an individual who (with the student) monitors student progress and supports both academic and non-academic aspects of the student journey.

In the pathways approach, developmental education shifts from the traditional stand-alone sequence of pre-collegiate courses to an accelerated on-ramp to a program of study, often with support for academic skill building embedded in college-level courses. The pathways college connects students as early as possible to their college-level program pathway and aims to ensure that they complete college-level English and math in their first year. This can be done effectively only if faculty and student services professionals work together to redesign the student experience.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ How do the roles and responsibilities for front-line student services staff need to change? How can the college provide professional development and support for those staff members?
- ▶ How can coaches help colleges differentiate between implementing a technology tool versus developing structures and business processes to support integrated advising and student services?
- ▶ What data and strategies can coaches use with colleges to help them shift their developmental education models from a stand-alone sequence of courses (or other isolated structure) to an extreme acceleration model aligned with the *Core Principles for Transforming Remediation*?
- ▶ What examples can coaches provide of colleges that have well-designed “onramps” to programs of study or have integrated academic skill building into college-level programs?

🗨️ OBSERVATIONS FROM PATHWAYS COACHES

- 💬 Make the supports an obvious next step by giving students checklists with activities like “apply, fill out FAFSA, go to orientation, go to advising, register for classes, pay for classes.” If students skip a step, it is everyone’s job to back them up to the step they missed. This can be as effective as putting a hold on a student’s record and will allow staff to spend their time serving students rather than trying to remove holds.

★ *Kathleen Cleary*

- Impress upon your college the benefit of having external experts facilitate discussions about process and practice changes. If the college is at a crossroad about the best advising model, encourage them to draw on the expertise of NACADA or other national experts. The relatively nominal cost to engage experts is a fraction of the time and resource cost when the institution gets bogged down in disagreements.

★ *Ed Bowling*

Print Resources

- 📄 [Core Principles for Transforming Remediation within a Comprehensive Student Success Strategy: A Joint Statement](#) (Achieving the Dream, American Association of Community Colleges, Charles A. Dana Center, Complete College America, Education Commission of the States, and JFF)
- 📄 [Core Principles Survey](#) (American Association of Community Colleges and Achieving the Dream)
Note: Click the link and a .docx file will automatically download.
- 📄 [Even One Semester: Full-Time Enrollment and Student Success](#) (Center for Community College Student Engagement)

Video

View videos associated with:

- ▶ [Math and other core coursework aligned to each program of study](#)
- ▶ [Help Students Get On A Path](#) (under Materials, view "Advising and Multiple Math Pathways" (Charles A. Dana Center)

IMPLEMENTATION

HELP STUDENTS STAY ON THEIR PATH

Supports to Keep Students on Track

It is not enough to get students engaged with the institution and into a program upon intake. Colleges have to build ongoing, inescapable advising that helps students see where they are on their program path; and there also must be a reliable process for intervention and inquiry when students make choices that take them off path. Further, faculty and student services staff will work together to design discipline-appropriate academic supports—supplemental instruction, tutoring, required study groups, lab time, etc.—that will be embedded in pathway courses. All of this work is accomplished through strong collaboration between instruction and student services, with student success understood as the shared responsibility.






DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ What process might coaches recommend for collaborative work involving faculty and student services staff in designing academic supports embedded in guided pathways?
- ▶ How might colleges monitor student use of student services interventions?
- ▶ To learn from colleges that have a holistic student support structure, ask this question: What do you know now that you wish you had known as you implemented student interventions and changed institutional structures?

🗨️ OBSERVATIONS FROM PATHWAYS COACHES

- 💬 Early alert is useful but only if it is full circle; is there communication regarding follow up to the faculty member who initiated the alert? Faculty engagement in the classroom is key to developing stronger ties to individual students. Sometimes all it takes is one dedicated faculty member following up with a student who is absent, struggling or confused. Careful and consistent case management is critical on the part of academic advisors. Intrusive advising helps students know you are aware and that you care. Milestones along the path provide students with encouragement and foster a sense of accomplishment. ★ *Joyce Walsh Portillo*
- 💬 Academic and non-academic supports pro-actively provided to students (not just available) are essential. Colleges should blow up existing advising and counseling structures and practices and start over to design a guided pathways structure of supports. ★ *John Nixon*

Print Resources

-  [iPASS Readiness Assessment](#)
Note: Click the link and a .docx file will automatically download.
-  [Integrated Student Support Redesign: A Toolkit For Redesigning Advising And Student Services to Effectively Support Every Student \(Achieving the Dream\)](#)
-  [Planning for Rollout and Adoption: A Guide for iPASS Institutions \(Achieving the Dream and Educause\)](#)
-  [Beyond Financial Aid: How Colleges Can Strengthen the Financial Stability of Low-Income Students and Improve Student Outcomes \(Lumina Foundation\)](#)
-  [The BFA Self-Assessment Guide \(National Center for Inquiry and Improvement\)](#)

Video

View videos associated with:

-  [Ongoing, intrusive advising](#)

IMPLEMENTATION

ENSURE STUDENTS ARE LEARNING

Using Effective Practices to Assess and Enrich Student Learning

The real success of guided pathways will come when teaching and learning practices support students through their programs of study at the same time the structural changes in the institution take hold. Faculty need to work within and across disciplines to identify the knowledge, skills and abilities students should have upon completion of their programs of study. Course-level learning outcomes should roll up to program learning outcomes and connect to employability skills and transfer programs. Learning assessment should provide a strong basis for continuing work to strengthen students' educational experiences in pathways. Active, experiential and applied learning opportunities should be integrated into students' programs, and faculty should work with student life professionals to align classroom and co-curricular learning within pathways.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS







- ▶ How can colleges leverage their existing student learning outcomes assessment approach to support student learning within pathways?
- ▶ How can colleges evolve their focus on assessment from course-level learning to achievement of program-level and general education/ liberal arts outcomes?
- ▶ How can colleges more broadly adopt the portfolio approach to demonstrating student learning?
- ▶ How can coaches encourage colleges to ensure that experiential/applied and other active learning approaches are systematically incorporated into courses within pathways?
- ▶ What examples might a coach provide to a college where faculty members are working to align appropriate co-curricular experiences to their pathways?
- ▶ How can colleges integrate feedback on gaps in student learning from employers and transfer institutions?
- ▶ What professional development is necessary for colleges to strengthen teaching and learning within meta-majors and pathways?

🗨️ OBSERVATIONS FROM PATHWAYS COACHES

- 💬 Unless the pathways work includes the student experience in the classroom, real transformation will be difficult to achieve. Pedagogy is very important, as is regular assessment of learning outcomes. ★ *John Nixon*
- 💬 Because approaches to assessment vary so widely across institutions, one important role coaches can play in assisting institutions with guided pathways is to ask them to articulate clearly the differences among institution-level learning outcomes, program-level learning outcomes, and course-level learning outcomes—and what assessment strategies are used at each of those levels. ★ *Donna Dare*


- All programs and courses need to be on a regular review cycle to include current practice and expectations. If outcomes are no longer relevant, they should be eliminated. Faculty should be encouraged to share artifacts and techniques for assessing student learning, both formative and summative. As new faculty members come on board, pairing them with seasoned mentors in the discipline helps develop expertise in assessment. Helping faculty (and staff) understand the difference between grades and the process of assessment is vital. Professional development should be ongoing and include current practices in assessment. ★ *Joyce Walsh Portillo*

Print Resources

-  [Learning Module: Improving Teaching and Learning](#) (Aspen Institute College Excellence Program)
-  [Rising to the LEAP Challenge: Case Studies of Integrative Pathways to Student Signature Work](#) (Association of American Colleges and Universities)
-  [A Matter of Degrees: Promising Practices for Community College Student Success \(A First Look\)](#) (Center for Community College Student Engagement)
-  [A Matter of Degrees: Engaging Practices, Engaging Students \(High-Impact Practices for Community College Student Engagement\)](#) (Center for Community College Student Engagement)
-  [A Matter of Degrees: Practices to Pathways \(High-Impact Practices for Community College Student Success\)](#) (Center for Community College Student Engagement)
-  [Pathways Focus Group Manual](#) (Center for Community College Student Engagement)

Video

View videos associated with:

-  [Ensure Students Are Learning](#)

Additional Pathways Resources

A larger collection of selected resources for the work of planning and implementing guided pathways is provided in the online Pathways Resource Center at www.pathwaysresources.org. There the user may click on the graphic model of pathways work to find additional information.

View Full Pathways Model Why Pathways? Toolkits Pathways Collaborative

GUIDED PATHWAYS RESOURCE CENTER

TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR COLLEGES

Bringing **guided pathways** to scale involves substantial redesign of students' educational experience and touches every aspect of college operations. The **guided pathways model** introduced below describes the critical steps colleges take as they do this challenging, complex work.

This resource center is organized around the guided pathways model. Click any section — **planning**, **implementation**, **early outcomes**, or **evaluation** — to see details of the model and to find relevant tools and resources. Or visit **toolkits** for collections of materials on key topics.


PLANNING

IMPLEMENTATION

EARLY
OUTCOMES

EVALUATION

Why Guided Pathways?



View or download the full guided pathways model

Toolkits

Pathways Institutes

Engagement Toolkit


Tools for Leaders

Pathways Coaching Guide


PATHWAYS COLLABORATIVE








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