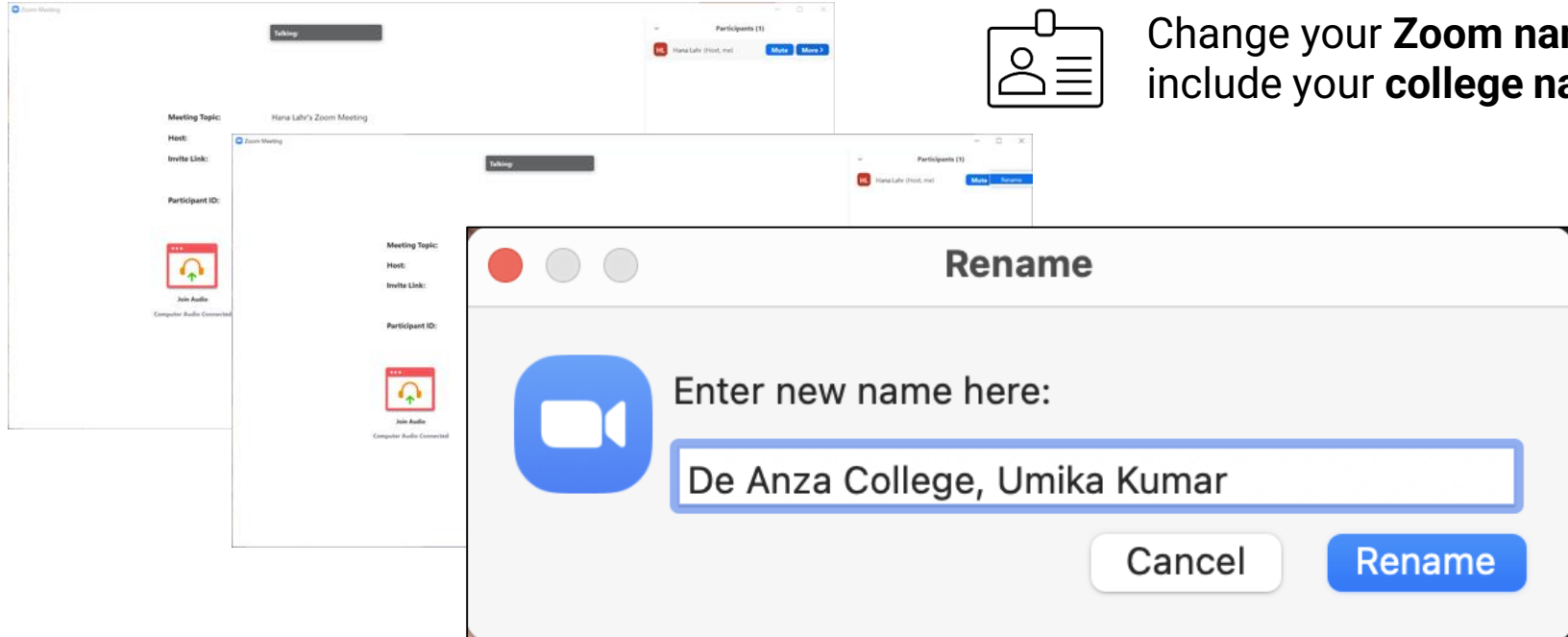# *Reimagining Program Onboarding through the Ask-Connect-Inspire-Plan Framework*

Hana Lahr & Davis Jenkins, CCRC
AACC Onboarding Workshop
October 15, 2021

Zoom names for breakout rooms

Change your **Zoom name** to include your **college name**

Rename

Enter new name here:

De Anza College, Umika Kumar

Cancel   Rename

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Based on 6 years of research, our thinking on guided pathways has evolved.

Why focus on program onboarding?

Students who gain early momentum are more likely to complete.

Early Academic Momentum

Gateway Course Momentum

Persistence and Course Completion

Fall-Spring Persistence

Completed college math/English in year 1

Course completion rate in year 1

Credit Momentum

Completed 24+ college credits in year 1

Early Program Momentum

Passing program gateway courses in year 1
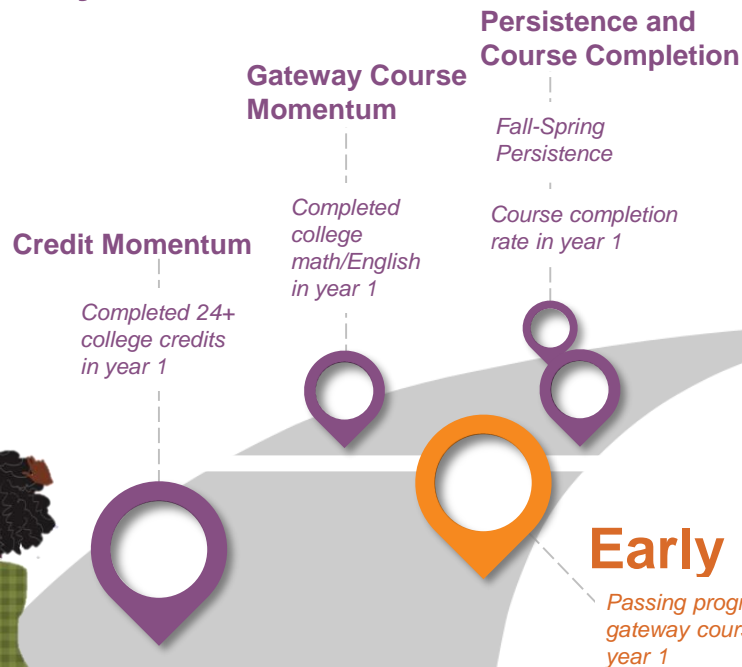
Longer-Term Outcomes

CCRC RESEARCH BRIEF
COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESEARCH CENTER | JULY 2019

Early Momentum Metrics
Leading Indicators for Community College Improvement

By Clive R. Belfield, Davis Jenkins, and John Fink

As community colleges across the country implement large-scale reforms to improve student success, they need timely and actionable metrics to determine if the changes they are making in a given year or term will likely improve student outcomes in the long run. In this brief, we examine how well nine measures of students' progress in their first year predict student completion in subsequent years and thus how suitable these early momentum metrics, or EMMs, are as leading indicators of the effectiveness of institutional reforms.

Based on analysis of student data from all community colleges in three states, we find that EMMs do predict longer term success for students. We also find that a key factor in low completion rates, as well as in equity gaps in completion rates, is that many students do not gain early momentum in the first year. College outcomes would be substantially higher if more students met EMMs. Our findings indicate the need for comprehensive reforms to community college organization and practice to help more students gain early momentum on their way to earning a credential.

> Based on analysis in three states, we find that measures of student progress in the first year predict student completion in subsequent years.

First-Year Indicators of Longer-Term Success

Throughout the nation, two-year and four-year colleges are recognizing that to "move the needle" on collegewide measures of success (e.g., completion rates) major redesign across the entire institution may be required to ensure that its programs, policies, and practices are well designed and aligned to promote student success. Hundreds of community colleges across the country are adopting whole-college reforms commonly referred to as "guided pathways" (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015). As part of these reforms, colleges are mapping requirements and options for programs of study so that they are aligned with desired employment and transfer outcomes, redesigning the onboarding process to help new students explore options and interests and develop an academic completion plan, and revamping advising to better support students in making timely progress toward completion of a credential. Faculty are also working together across disciplines to ensure that curricula and teaching prepare students to succeed in employment and transfer in their field of study.

Because they involve a redesign of college practices at scale, guided pathways reforms take several years to implement (Jenkins, Lahr, Fink, & Ganga, 2018, pp. 2–3). Given that whole-college

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Early momentum has added benefits for students of color and low-income students...

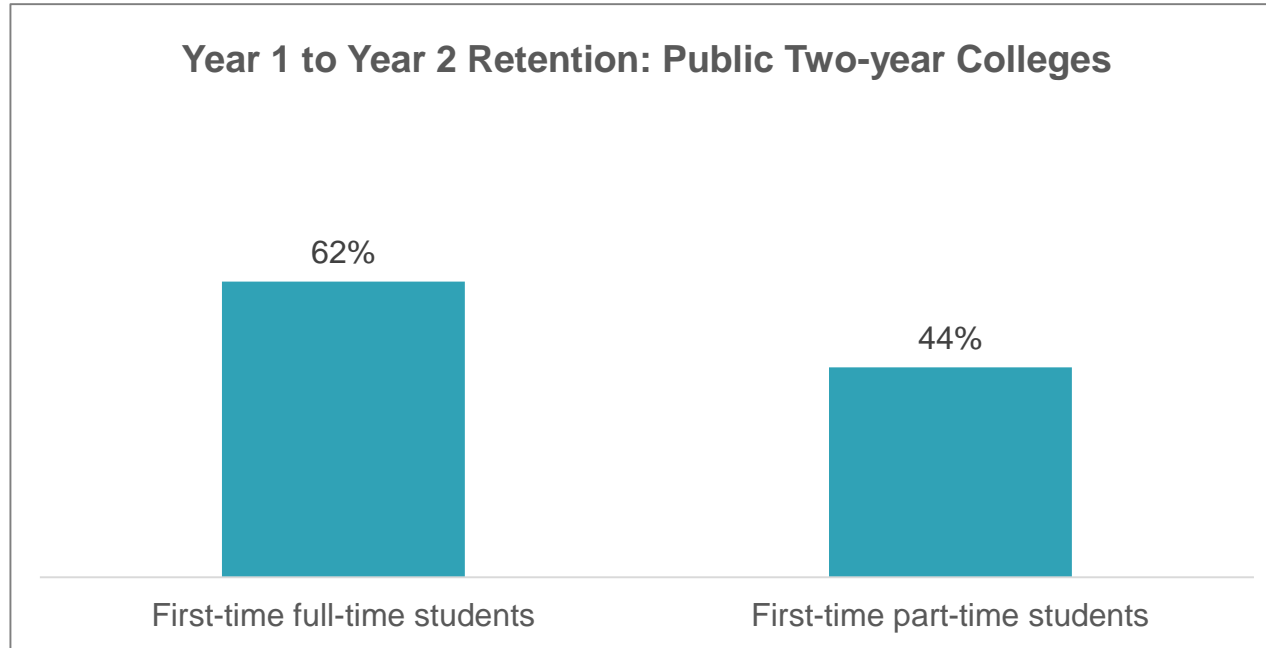| Benefit of completing 12+ college-level credits on transferring and completing a bachelor's degree	Black students	Hispanic students	Other students
	2.4x	4.2x	1.7x

		Effects even larger for…		
Transfer to a four-year institution	**Benefit of milestone (baseline group: White)**	**Black students**	**Hispanic students**	**Low-income students**
Credit momentum (6+, 12+, or 24+ college credits)	3–5x	3–**6x**	**6–11x**	**7–8x**
Gateway English/math (college-level)	3–4x	3–4x	**6–8x**	**4–6x**
Completed transfer degree	7–8x	**9–11x**	**11–18x**	**11–13x**
Transfer and bachelor's completion				
Credit momentum (6+, 12+, or 24+ college credits)	1.7–2x	**2–3x**	**4–5x**	**7–9x**
Gateway English/math (college-level)	1.6–3x	**2–4x**	**4–5x**	**4–5x**
Completed transfer degree	3–4x	**5–6x**	**5–9x**	**6–7x**

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...but many students, particularly those from underserved groups, have dropped by year 2

Year 1 to Year 2 Retention: Public Two-year Colleges

62%

44%

First-time full-time students

First-time part-time students

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Students benefit from taking program foundation courses in their field of interest early on

Students who successfully transferred in STEM more frequently took STEM transfer courses before transfer math courses.

Is it helpful for students to get a 'taste' of STEM to keep them interested as they work through the math courses?

First Semester

Math Courses

'Likely Transferable' STEM Courses

STEM

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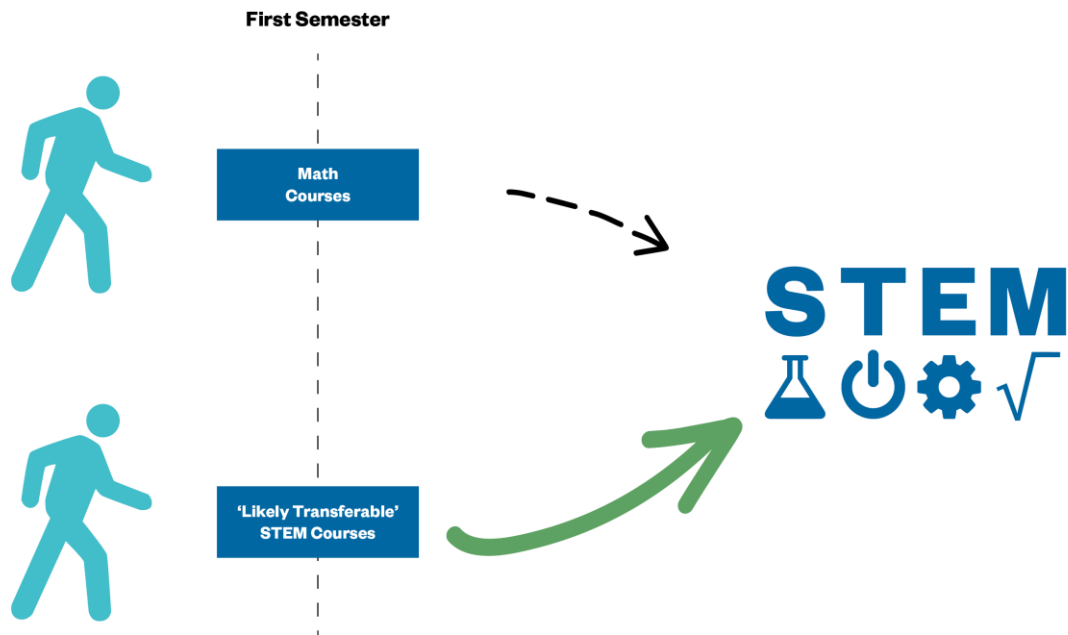
Is it clear to students where their programs lead?

Category	Description	Examples
Workforce: Low	Program places students into jobs with low average earnings (e.g., less than $14/hour)	Criminal Justice, Automobile Technology, Early Childhood
Workforce: Medium	Program places students into relatively middle-paying job (e.g., between $14-$17.55/ hour)	Accounting, Welding, Business Management, Dental Assistant
Workforce: High	Program places students into a relatively high-paying job (e.g., more than $17.55/ hour)	Nursing, Radiology Technology, Sonography, Dental Hygiene
Transfer: Structured	Program designed to prepare students for a particular baccalaureate major/meta-major and/or a specific four-year destination	AA-Business (DTA), AS-T (Engineering)
Transfer: Unstructured	Program designed for general transfer (no pre-major or university destination necessarily specified)	AA-General Studies, "General Transfer"
Undeclared or Unknown	Listed as undeclared or missing program information	Null, Missing Program, Undeclared
Uncategorized or Other	Non-degree seeking, ESL, ABE, dual enrollment	Basic Education, ESL, Running Start

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Too many community college students (including dual enrollment students) are not enrolled in a program that clearly leads to a good job or transfer in their major field of interest.

What motivation do these students have to complete their programs?

| Total Students: | 1,199 |

PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS WITHIN CATEGORIES

- UNKNOWN/UNDECLARED
- WORKFORCE
- Transfer - Structured
- Transfer - Unstructured
- WORKFORCE - Preparatory
- Workforce - Low
- Workforce - Medium
- OTHER

Workforce - Low
- Practical Nursing, 57
- Emergency Medical Services, 30
- Paraprofessional Education, 27
- Medical Assisting, 25
- Paramedic, 17
- Automotive, 13
- Medical Laborator...
- Esthetics, 5
- Massage Therapy, 10
- Compu ter...
- Hosp ....
- Book kee...
- Cosmetology, 35
- Medical Billing & Coding, 22
- Diesel Service Techno...
- Health Infor...
- Soc L...
- IT F...
- Ch L...

OTHER
- Dual Credit, 162
- Early Admitted HS, 70

Transfer - Unstructured
- General Studies, 202

Transfer - Structured
- Computer Science, 43
- Social Services, 30
- Criminal Justice, 24
- Business Administration, 19

UNKNOWN/UNDECL...
- Undeclared, 45
- Prison Courses, 27
- Board of Governors, 14

WORKFORCE - Preparatory
- Health Professions, 139

Workforce - Medium
- Electrical Distribution Tech, 23
- Legal Assisting, 10
- Indu stria l...
- Welding, 47

WORKFORCE
- Business, 53
- M g m t & S

Source: Fink and Jenkins (2020). https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/unpacking-program-enrollments-completion-equity.html

Most colleges do not actively help noncredit adult education and workforce students to bridge into credit programs.

Total Students:	7,753

PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS WITHIN CATEGORIES

- ■ Arts & Humanities
- ■ Business
- ■ CTE/Typically Non-Transfer
- ■ Health Programs
- ■ Natural Resources
- ■ Non-Credit Student
- ■ Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
- ■ Social Sciences and Education
- ■ Undeclared
- ■ (blank)

Non-Credit Student

Non-credit student, 2,693

Undeclared

Not Seeking a Degree, 729

Exploratory, 533

Associate of General Studies, 143

Undeclared Transfer Major, 135

General Transfe...

CTE/Typically Non-Transfer

Fire Science, 136

Aviation-Prof Pilot Airplane, 125

Nursing, 98

Aviation-Prof Pilot Helicop...

Criminal Justice, 67

General Business, 61

Massage Therapy, 59

Manufacturin...

Culinary Arts, 42

Dental Assist...

Early Child...

Addic tion...

Small Busi...

Medical Assistant, 55

Health Infor...

Forest Res...

Unma nne...

We...

We...

G...

Em...

Practical Nursing, 48

Bakin g &...

Auto...

Com...

A...

M...

W...

Accoun ing, 47

Para me...

Nur...

Entr...

P...

H

A

O

Comput er & Infor...

Manage...

Ma...

Net...

V...

C

J

C

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

Engineeri ng, 136

Biological Sciences, 132

Oregon Transfer-Comp Science, 95

Dental Hygien...

Ma...

Pre-Med/Vet erinary/D entistry, 89

P... C...

A... G...

Social Sciences and Education

Psychology, 161

Criminal Justice, 74

Education - Element...

Early Childhoo d...

Educa tion...

Pr...

Human Services, 48

Ec...

Ant...

His...

So...

P...

W...

Health Programs

Nursing - Transfer Prep, 317

Exercise Science-...

Pre-Ph...

Outd...

P... H...

Arts &...

Art, 116

Comm unic...

Music, 28

Englis h/Li...

Lib...

Business

Oregon Transfer-Business, 189

Natural...

Natu ral Re...

For... Fir...

Despite the rising cost of a community college education, many cc credentials do not have strong labor market returns.

Source: https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/john.fink/viz/IPEDSCollegeAwardsdev/CompletionsbyProgram

Transfer AAs are valuable only if students apply credits toward a BA _in their major field of interest_…

Just **58%** of students successfully transferred 90% of their credits.

And **15%** can't transfer any credits at all.

Students who can transfer 90% of their credits were **2.5x** more likely to get their bachelor's degree, compared to those who transfer half or less.

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But about half of community college associate degrees are general AAs, which are not well-aligned with bachelor's major requirements.

Program Categories
- Arts, Humanities, Communic...
- Business
- Computer & Information Scie...
- Education & Child Care
- Health
- Human Services & Public Safe...
- Industrial & Applied Technolo...
- Other CTE
- Social & Behavioral Sciences
- STEM

Pct. of Total Awards
(All Students)

Associate degrees awarded by public 2-year colleges in 2018-19 by field.

Bachelor's degrees awarded by public 4-year colleges in 2018-19 by field.

47% of associate degrees awarded by ccs were in "liberal studies"; 18% of bachelor's awarded by 4-year publics were in arts, humanities, communication

COVID has hit community colleges and their students hard.

The Decline in Traditional-College-Age Students Was Sharper Than Among Students 25 and Older

Attendance by students ages 18 to 24 fell by 5 percent this spring, with community-college enrollment taking the hardest hit within that age group.

% change from previous year

■ 18 to 24   ■ 25+

	18 to 24	25+
Public 4-year	−2.0%	2.7%
Private nonprofit 4-year	−2.8%	2.3%
Private for-profit 4-year	0.8%	−2.0%
Public 2-year	−13.2%	−6.1%
Overall	−5.0%	−1.2%
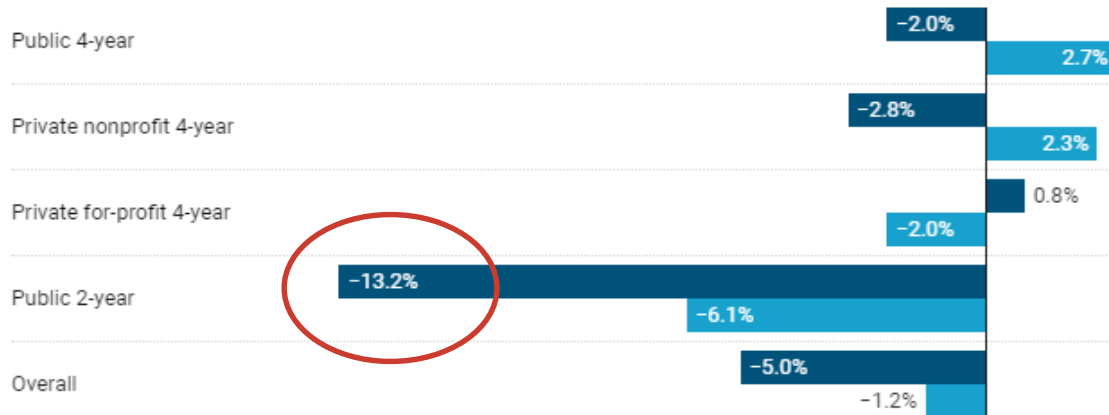
Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center · Get the data · Created with Datawrapper

Chronicle of higher Education, June 10, 2021, showing change in enrollment in spring 2021 compared with previous spring.

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But community college enrollment has been declining since 2011. CCs have lost market share to public 4-years...
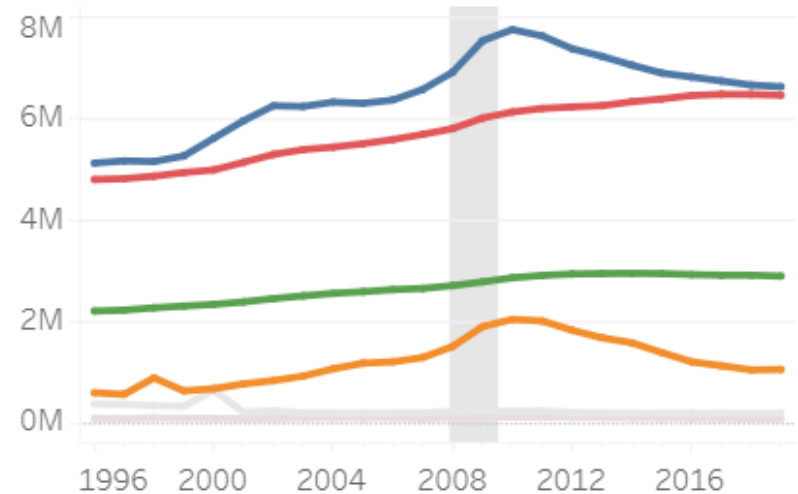
...especially among traditional college-age students even as older student enrollment has declined sharply.
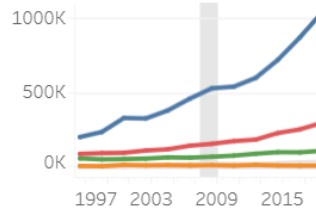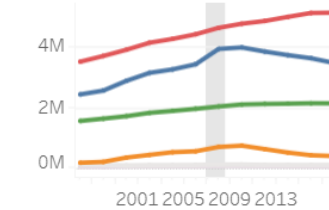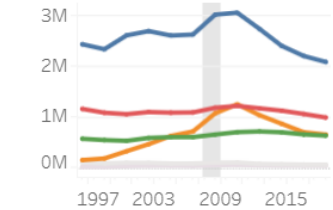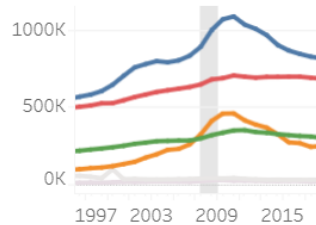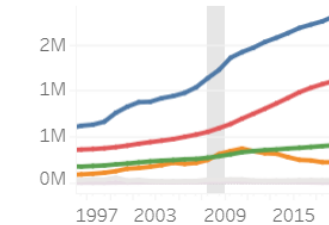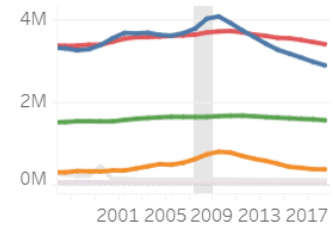
To achieve more equitable outcomes (and build back enrollment) community colleges need to _reimagine the program onboarding experience_ using these research-based design principles:

Ask   Connect Inspire   Plan

Discuss: *What experiences in college had the biggest impact on your choice of major?*

Ask-Connect-Inspire-Plan framework for redesigning onboarding

Program onboarding sets students up for success.

- **Onboarding** is the process of helping students select, enter, and gain experience in a program of study. This process starts as soon as students apply and is not complete until students have chosen a program, built an educational plan, and taken and passed program gateway courses, which can take up to a year.

- **A program of study** prepares students to secure or advance in a job and/or transfer with no excess credits in the student's field of interest.

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When you consider your fall 2021 new students...

- What percentage of students are in liberal studies AA programs?
- What percentage of students aren't in any program? (including dual enrollment, non-credit, continuing education, adult basic education, undecided)
- How much do you know about your students' interest and goals and how can the college set them up for their next steps?

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Ask

Every student is engaged in an ongoing conversation about their interests, strengths, and aspirations and is guided to programs and people at the college with similar interests.

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Asking students about their interests and aspirations

- Intake surveys and career assessments
- Additional advising and support for undecided students
- Introducing middle and high school students to career options

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Central Carolina Community College Embark: RIASEC-based assessment of career interests

RIASEC-based assessment of career interests

Matching career interests to our programs

Career Decision Inventory

Questions to determine confidence in career choice

Your Overall Results

Realistic	Investigative	Artistic	Social	Enterprising	Conventional
0	6	0	4	3	0

Programs That Match Your Interests

- **Associate Degree Nursing**
- **Dental Hygiene**
- **Practical Nursing**
- **University Transfer: Associate in Arts**
- **University Transfer: Associate in Science**
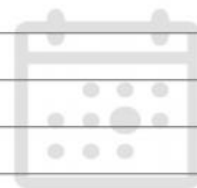
Your Advisor

Advisor's Name

Advisor's Phone

Asking students about their interests, strengths, goals

- Developmental Faculty advisors - Students with an intermediate career decision (CDI) readiness
  - Short-term intervention
  - Training developed by career counselors
  - Career advising, online inventories, hands-on career activities
  - Students then referred to academic advisor or career center counselor
- Career counselors see students with the highest career decision concerns

Central Carolina Community College
Developmental Faculty Advising Manual

M.A.P.
My Academic Pathway
Goals **P**rogress **S**uccess

Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) initiative to help students with short-term academic to career development advising intervention.
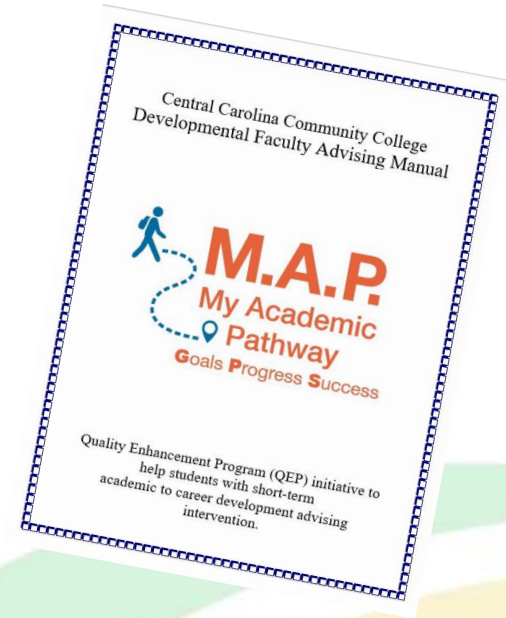
Embark Referral Process:

CDI 2-6 — Faculty Advisors

CDI 7-8 — Developmental Faculty Advisors

CDI 9+ — Career Counselor

CENTRAL CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
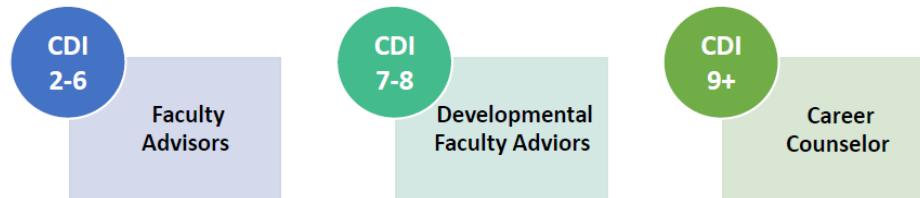
Program Information sheets

Confirming knowledge of programs

Is it working?

- Most students (75-80%) have selected a program that corresponds to their top two RIASEC categories
- About 90% of the students who have selected a program outside of their RIASEC categories switch to one which does
- About 24% of students need additional career conversations based on CDI
- 95% of the students recommended that entering students should take the RIASEC; 98% found it easy to do

100% IPEDS graduation

+10 %

150% IPEDS graduation

+19 %

Program Changes
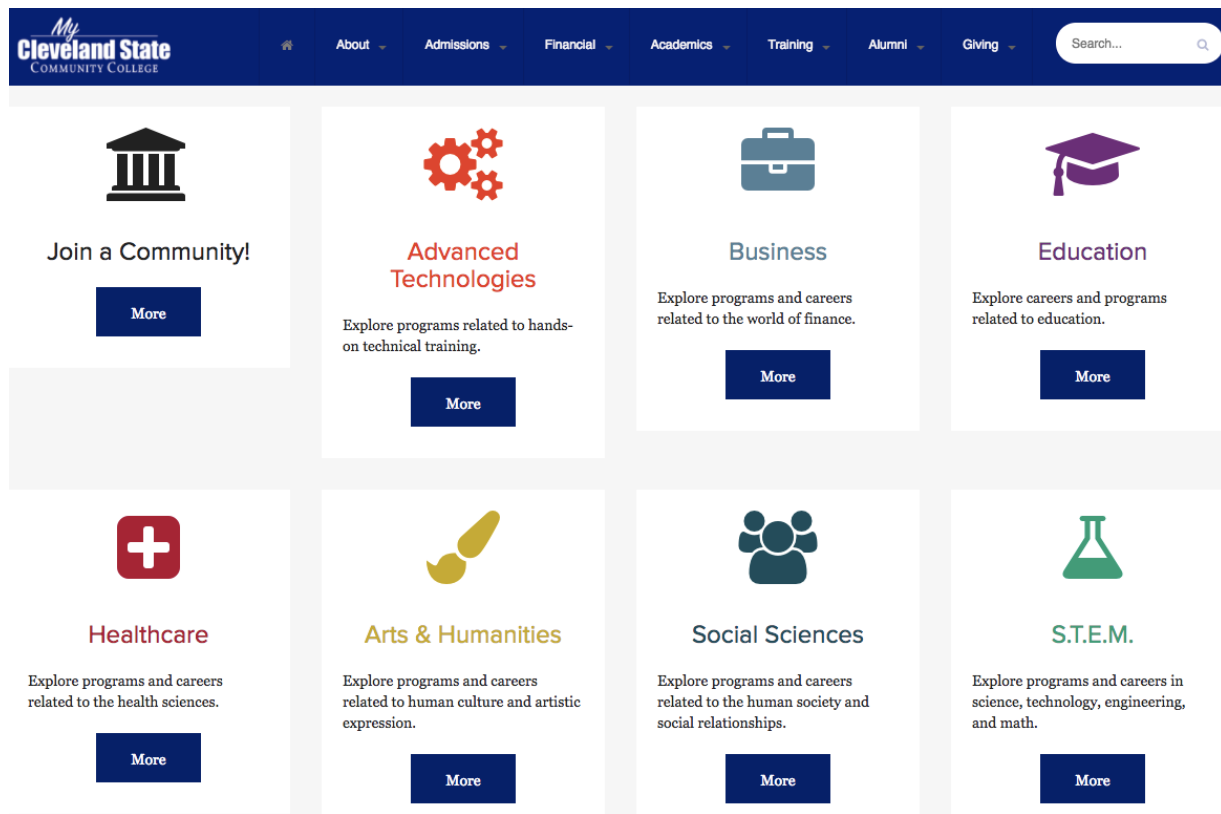
-10- 16%

CENTRAL CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
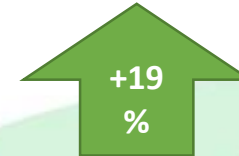
Connect

From the start, colleges organize opportunities for all students to meet with faculty, students, alumni, and employers in fields of interest to them.

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Connecting students to academic and career communities

- Orientation and advising based on meta-majors
- Program and field showcase events
- Faculty liaisons

Colleges are using **meta-majors** to **organize new student onboarding** and career/program exploration

HomeBase Structure

- Launched as virtual HomeBases, Fall 2020
- Tied to 6 Areas of Interest
- Success Team approach
- Guided by Tri-Chair model

Students First
Including ESL, older students, and exploratory.

Case Management @ Scale
Scale successes of traditional case management programs

RPT
Retention, Persistence, Time to Completion

Goals

Why HomeBase Pathway Communities?

Inspire

Every student takes at least one course in term 1 on topics of interest that "lights their fire" for learning

Inspiring students to learn

- Program-relevant courses for all students in the first term
- Service learning and project-based learning
- Active and co-curricular learning techniques with dual enrollment students
- Professional development for faculty

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Active learning is key motivator for underserved STEM-transfer intending students to persist in STEM

Source: Wang, X (2020). *On My Own: The Challenges and Promise of Building Equitable STEM Transfer Pathways*. Harvard Education Press.
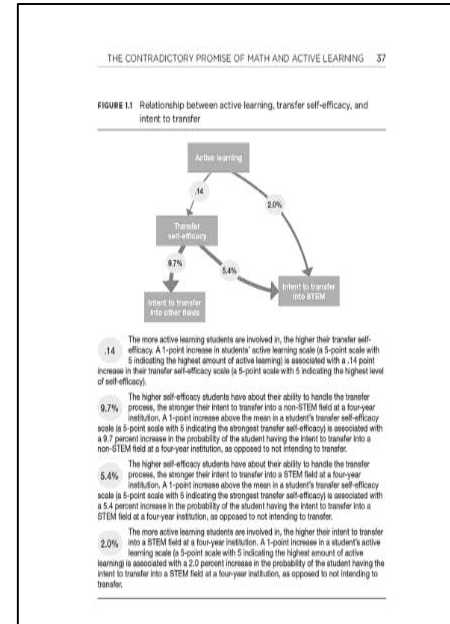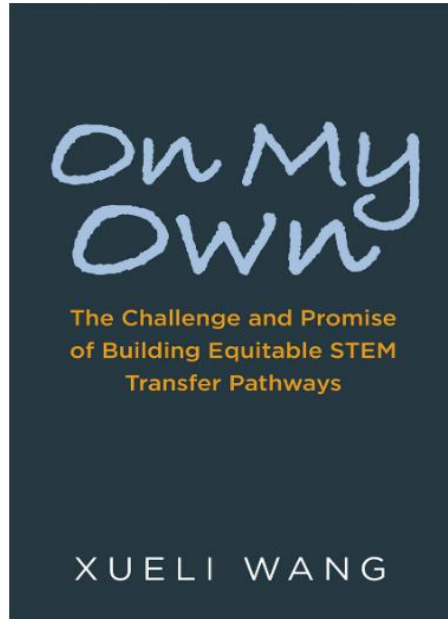
INSPIRE: Building confidence as college learners

The courses students take during initial terms of enrollment:

- define the college experience
- facilitate exploration of interests
- can create confidence as learners which research suggests is key factor in completion

Many students do not take inspiring first-term courses. Why?

- Students self-advise

- Advisors recommend "safe" general education courses

- Students are unable to access program-level courses because of developmental education (including corequisite courses)

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Are students taking courses in their first terms that "light the fire" for learning?

#1 Program

Liberal Arts and Sciences – Associate in Arts (*N* = 1300 students)

Rank	Course Title	Course ID	# of program students who took the course	% of program students who took the course
1	INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY	2012	254	19%
2	FRESHMAN ENGLISH I	1101	250	19%
3	HUMAN ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY I	1085C	248	19%
4	FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE SEMINAR	1106	241	18%
5	INTRO TO MICROCOMP/WINDOWS	1100C	180	14%
6	FUND OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION	2608	164	13%
7	INTERMEDIATE ALGEBRA	1033	146	11%
8	AMERICAN GOVERNMENT	1041	128	10%
9	COLLEGE ALGEBRA	1105	126	10%
10	GENERAL SOCIOLOGY	2000	90	7%
>10	**2** other different courses attempted by at least 1 student from this program			

Dual Enrollment

(*N* = 605 students)

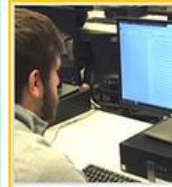| Rank	Course Title	Course ID	# of program students who took the course	% of program students who took the course
1	FRESHMAN ENGLISH I	1101	223	37%
2	COLLEGE ALGEBRA	1105	186	31%
3	INTRO TO MICROCOMP/WINDOWS	1100C	117	19%
4	FUND OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION	2608	111	18%
5	INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY	2012	87	14%
6	AMERICAN GOVERNMENT	1041	68	11%
7	SURVEY OF ECONOMICS	1000	60	10%
8	FRESHMAN ENGLISH II	1102	42	7%
9	INTRODUCTORY SURVEY TO 1877	1010	40	7%
10	PRECALCULUS ALGEBRA	1140	38	6%
>10	**2** other different courses attempted by at least 1 student from this program			

Service Learning at Sinclair Community College

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Plan

Help every student to develop a full-program educational plan that shows them a path to their goals.

Planning a path to help students achieve their goals

- **To ensure every student has a path, plans should be:**
  - required as part of advising and first-year experience courses
  - built to cover the entire program through completion or transfer
  - based on a standard program map, but customized for each student
  - easily accessible
  - regularly monitored and updated
  - tied to scheduling and registration

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What students say they want during onboarding

- Assistance exploring academic and career interests
- Information on program options in fields of interest and their connection to career and baccalaureate transfer opportunities
- Opportunities to interact with other new and current students, faculty, and others who share similar academic and career interests
- The chance to take a course on topics of interest in term 1
- Assistance developing a full-program academic and financial plan
- Note: Students who have clear career goals need different kinds of support than those who don't

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Placing equity at the center of program onboarding

In order to achieve equity in outcomes for marginalized and underserved students, it is critical to tailor onboarding support to meet the needs of different student groups, for example:

- Students from races/ ethnic groups historically excluded from higher education, English learners
- Military students
- International students
- Students with disabilities

- Undecided students
- Adult students
- Recent high school graduates
- Dual enrollment students
- Students enrolled in basic skills programs
- Additional target populations at our college

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Activity A: Reimagining the program onboarding experience

How can we enrich the onboarding experience for all students while tailoring it for specific underserved groups?

Reimagining the program onboarding experience

Program onboarding design principle	What do students currently experience related to this design principle?	What experience (related to the given principle) should we provide for all students?
ASK every student about their interests, strengths, aspirations		
CONNECT them with faculty, students, alumni, others with similar interests		
INSPIRE learning in term 1 through "light the fire" college-level courses on issues of interest		
Help every student development individualized education PLAN aligned to jobs/transfer in field of interest by end of term 1		

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Discuss: What are your boldest ideas for reimagining program onboarding?

How could we personalize ACIP practices to underserved student groups?

Personalizing the program onboarding experience

| Program onboarding design principle	How can we personalize the experience to particular groups of students who are currently not well served—e.g., undecided students, older students, non-credit students, dual enrollment students, etc.? (Identify the student groups in each case)
ASK every student about their interests, strengths, aspirations	
CONNECT them with faculty, students, alumni, others with similar interests	
INSPIRE learning in term 1 through "light the fire" college-level courses on issues of interest	
Help every student development individualized education PLAN aligned to jobs/transfer in field of interest by end of term 1	

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Oh, The Places They'll Go

Goal-Oriented Program Onboarding Redesign

Coming in October 2021!

CCRCWORKSHOPS
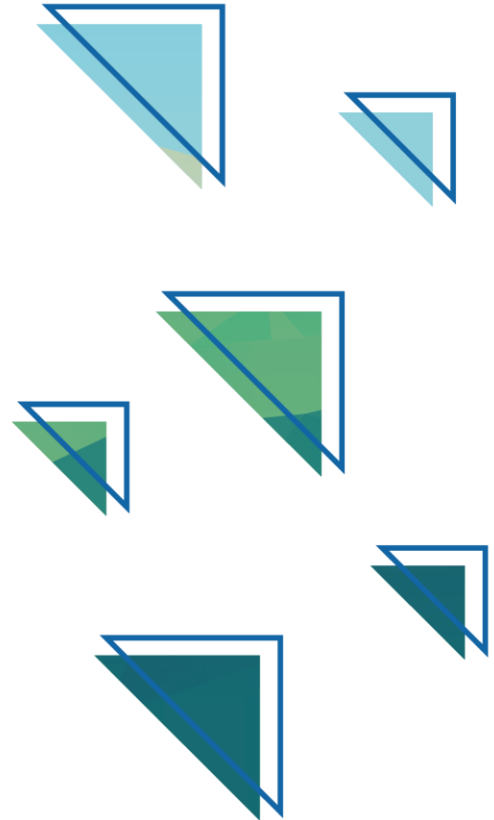
Promote Equitable Program Momentum by Asking, Connecting, Inspiring, and Planning

Thank you!

Questions? Please reach out!

Hana Lahr, lahr@tc.columbia.edu
Davis Jenkins, davisjenkins@gmail.com

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