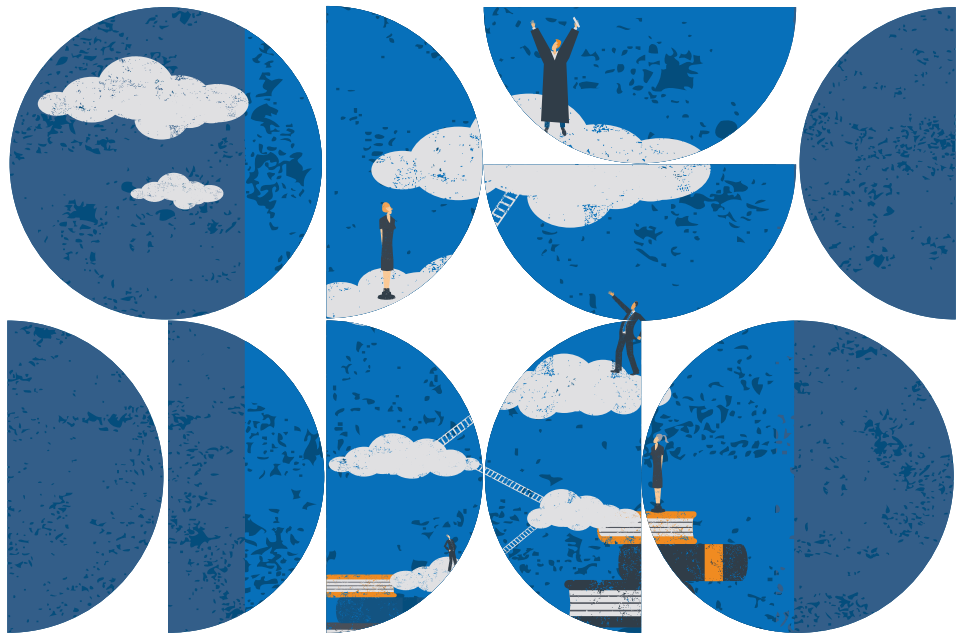
EAB

Achieving Pathways Goals with **Student-Centered Design**

Community College Executive Forum



EAB

Achieving Pathways Goals with Student-Centered Design

Community College Executive Forum

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 5

Introduction: The Completion Imperative 7

Chapter 1: Designing Student-Centric Pathways 15

Tactic 1: Sticky Note Speed Sequencing 19

Tactic 2: Crowdsourced Program Maps 21

Tactic 3: Community-Endorsed Career Clusters 24

Tactic 4: Expedited Course-Overlap Identifier 26

Tactic 5: Jargon-Free Map Design 28

Chapter 2: Aligning Course Capacity to Student Demand 29

Tactic 6: Registration-Based Schedule Predictor 31

Tactic 7: Guaranteed Course Schedule 33

Tactic 8: Future-Demand Retraining Grants 36

Tactic 9: Completion-Based Registration Rules 38

Chapter 3: Fostering Goal-Based Student Decision-Making 39

Tactic 10: Campus-Wide Directed Decision Days 41

Tactic 11: First-Year Pathway Exposure Course 44

Tactic 12: Professional Goal-Setting Advisors 46

Tactic 13: Competitive-Major Stop-Out Campaign 49

Chapter 4: Flexing Pathways for Off-Pace Students 53

Tactic 14: Financial Aid-Supported Intersession Courses 51

Tactic 15: Year-Round Default Mini-Mester 57

Implementation Toolkit 59

Advisors to Our Work 83

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Community College Executive Forum

Project Director

Magda Rolfes

Contributing Consultants

Stuart Davis
Larisa Hussak

Design Consultant

Alyssa Dillon

Executive Director

Franziska Shaw

LEGAL CAVEAT

EAB Global, Inc. ("EAB") has made efforts to verify the accuracy of the information it provides to members. This report relies on data obtained from many sources, however, and EAB cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided or any analysis based thereon. In addition, neither EAB nor any of its affiliates (each, an "EAB Organization") is in the business of giving legal, accounting, or other professional advice, and its reports should not be construed as professional advice. In particular, members should not rely on any legal commentary in this report as a basis for action, or assume that any tactics described herein would be permitted by applicable law or appropriate for a given member's situation. Members are advised to consult with appropriate professionals concerning legal, tax, or accounting issues, before implementing any of these tactics. No EAB Organization or any of its respective officers, directors, employees, or agents shall be liable for any claims, liabilities, or expenses relating to (a) any errors or omissions in this report, whether caused by any EAB organization, or any of their respective employees or agents, or sources or other third parties, (b) any recommendation by any EAB Organization, or (c) failure of member and its employees and agents to abide by the terms set forth herein.

EAB is a registered trademark of EAB Global, Inc. in the United States and other countries. Members are not permitted to use these trademarks, or any other trademark, product name, service name, trade name, and logo of any EAB Organization without prior written consent of EAB. Other trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos used within these pages are the property of their respective holders. Use of other company trademarks, product names, service names, trade names, and logos or images of the same does not necessarily constitute (a) an endorsement by such company of an EAB Organization and its products and services, or (b) an endorsement of the company or its products or services by an EAB Organization. No EAB Organization is affiliated with any such company.

IMPORTANT: Please read the following.

EAB has prepared this report for the exclusive use of its members. Each member acknowledges and agrees that this report and the information contained herein (collectively, the "Report") are confidential and proprietary to EAB. By accepting delivery of this Report, each member agrees to abide by the terms as stated herein, including the following:

1. All right, title, and interest in and to this Report is owned by an EAB Organization. Except as stated herein, no right, license, permission, or interest of any kind in this Report is intended to be given, transferred to, or acquired by a member. Each member is authorized to use this Report only to the extent expressly authorized herein.
2. Each member shall not sell, license, republish, distribute, or post online or otherwise this Report, in part or in whole. Each member shall not disseminate or permit the use of, and shall take reasonable precautions to prevent such dissemination or use of, this Report by (a) any of its employees and agents (except as stated below), or (b) any third party.
3. Each member may make this Report available solely to those of its employees and agents who (a) are registered for the workshop or membership program of which this Report is a part, (b) require access to this Report in order to learn from the information described herein, and (c) agree not to disclose this Report to other employees or agents or any third party. Each member shall use, and shall ensure that its employees and agents use, this Report for its internal use only. Each member may make a limited number of copies, solely as adequate for use by its employees and agents in accordance with the terms herein.
4. Each member shall not remove from this Report any confidential markings, copyright notices, and/or other similar indicia herein.
5. Each member is responsible for any breach of its obligations as stated herein by any of its employees or agents.
6. If a member is unwilling to abide by any of the foregoing obligations, then such member shall promptly return this Report and all copies thereof to EAB.

Supporting Members in Best Practice Implementation

Resources Available Within Your Membership

This publication is only the beginning of our work to help members improve student success. Recognizing that ideas seldom speak for themselves, our ambition is to work actively with members of the Community College Executive Forum to decide which practices are most relevant for your organization, to accelerate consensus among key constituencies, and to reduce implementation time.

We offer a variety of services to assist you with your mission. For additional information about any of the services detailed below, please contact your organization's relationship manager or visit our website at eab.com. To order additional copies of this publication, please search for it by title on eab.com.

Implementation Road Maps and Tools

Throughout the publication, this symbol will alert you to any corresponding tools and templates available in the Toolkit at the back of this book. These tools are also available on our website at eab.com.

Recorded and Private-Label Webconference Sessions

Our website will include hour-long webconferences that can walk you through the practices highlighted in this publication. Forum experts are also available to conduct private webconferences with your team.

Unlimited Expert Troubleshooting

Members may contact the consultants who worked on any report to discuss the research, troubleshoot obstacles to implementation, or run deep on unique issues. Our staff conducts hundreds of telephone consultations every year.

Facilitated On-Site Presentations

Our experts regularly visit campuses to lead half-day to daylong sessions focused on highlighting key insights for senior leaders or helping internal project teams select the most relevant practices and determine next steps.

To access the full range of services available to you, please visit our website at eab.com/ccef.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Executive Summary

Achieving Pathways Goals with Student-Centered Design

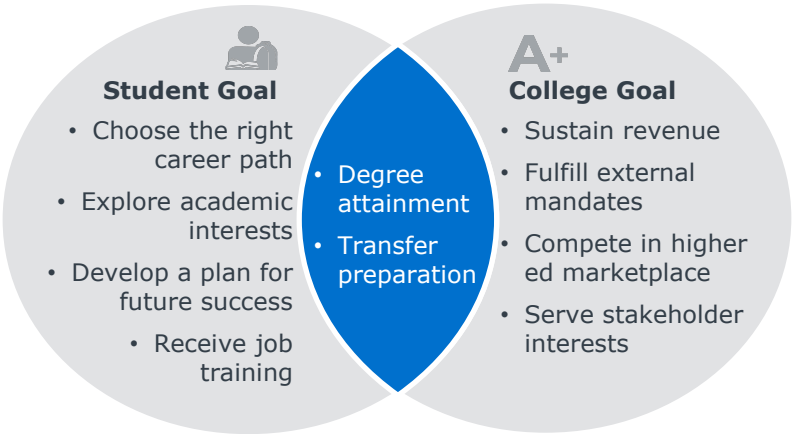
Incremental Efforts to Improve Student Success Insufficient to Match Current Challenges

The emerging student demographic is underserved by legacy college practices. While the student profile at community colleges has changed dramatically in recent years, the practices and norms in place on college campuses—from course scheduling to career advising—have not. As a result, students do not receive the support they need in order to graduate or transfer on time, resulting in low and stagnant completion rates. This is a significant cause for concern as labor market needs and performance-based funding initiatives continue to put pressure on community colleges to boost student outcomes.

Failing to provide structure has cascading negative consequences. A growing number of college students arrive on campus with a limited understanding of the academic and career opportunities available to them. The traditional cafeteria model of program selection fails to address this knowledge gap by presenting students with an excess of choices and very little direction on how to make informed decisions. Coupled with infrequent advising touches, this leads to excess credit accumulation, unnecessary delays, and regular stop-outs.

The goals of colleges and their students rarely align. Prioritizing external trends or administrative goals over student needs results in policies and practices that fail to account for the real-life challenges students encounter on college campuses. Recognizing students' goals—as well as the roadblocks they face while trying to achieve those goals—is fundamental to cultivating a culture of student success. Colleges must reframe their institutional focus to align with those needs.

Student and Institutional Goals Often Differ Wildly



Guided Pathways Brings Promise...

Colleges can offer students structure without sacrificing opportunities for exploration. While an exhaustive list of program and course options can overwhelm students, a "one size fits all" approach to academic programming fails to provide them with the opportunity to explore various interests and opportunities on campus. The cornerstone of Guided Pathways is a balance of structure and flexibility which, much like a GPS system, provides students with clear directions for completion while also allowing for self-directed exploration. Similar to how a GPS-based application guides a traveler from point A to point B, Guided Pathways charts an optimal course for community college students from enrollment to completion. The optimal route may be a straight line (i.e., accumulation of credits in as efficient a manner as possible) or a scenic path (i.e., accrual of credits from a variety of programs), depending on the needs of the student.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Executive Summary (cont.)

Achieving Pathways Goals with Student-Centered Design

...But Also Potential Pitfalls

The push for cross-campus action minimizes the importance of principled and sequential action. While momentum around Guided Pathways has grown substantially, this has at times led to colleges attempting to implement all aspects of the complex reform at once, without a structured action plan. As a result, administrators are unable to effectively prioritize time and resource allocation, creating unnecessary delays. Instead, institutions should formulate a sequential implementation plan based on their current organizational structure and student needs to ensure an effective and efficient roll-out.

Successful reform requires—but often lacks—widespread commitment to a student-centric approach. To effectively implement Guided Pathways, colleges must ensure faculty and staff share the goals of the administration and demonstrate readiness to implement substantial curricular reform through a student-centric approach. However, widespread engagement is often difficult to come by, and administrators struggle to craft policies that incorporate faculty input while placing student needs first. Failing to cultivate buy-in around a student-centric approach results in inconsistencies in reform roll-outs and messaging to students.

Defaulting to the curricular status quo keeps roadblocks to success in place for at-risk students. While many colleges roll over existing course sequences and requirements from year to year, doing so fails to address common student challenges of accessing gateway courses and completing all program requirements in a timely manner. Administrators must be willing to rethink their program design processes and use the student perspective, along with effective design principles, to create program maps that promote on-time completion.

Redesign Curriculum and Academic Structures to Meet Student Needs

Administration should partner with academic leaders to ensure that program design balances noncompeting needs for structure and exploration. Guided Pathways aims to remedy the problems created by the traditional "cafeteria" model of course selection through the use of structured program maps and meta-majors, which outline clear paths to completion and encourage career and academic exploration. Constructing program maps and meta-majors that incorporate effective design principles, faculty and staff input, and clear messaging allows colleges to balance students' needs for structure and exploration.

Next, course scheduling must be crafted to match student capacity requirements driven by data and student insights. Registration obstacles, including under- and over-filled classes, unpredictable schedules, and prioritization of total credit accumulation, are consistently cited by students as major barriers to success. By introducing structured program maps, Guided Pathways provides the opportunity for administrators to predict and respond to student scheduling needs in order to avoid common registration pain points. Understanding students' progress within a pathway can also aid staff in making decisions about registration priorities.

Create Scaled and Responsive Support Services

Rather than focus on the quantity of advisors, colleges should prioritize efficient delivery of high-quality advice that fosters goal-based student decisions. As colleges implement Guided Pathways and reform their curricular design and scheduling practices, the burden of determining course schedules is reduced for advisors. As a result, their role must be reformulated to focus on assisting students with setting and achieving long-term goals. In order to conduct this work at scale, colleges should rethink traditional formats of advising delivery and consider innovating on channels of delivery. We recommend a hybrid approach that integrates technology, rethinks face-to-face engagement, and provides professional training for all in advisory positions.

Colleges should design pathways that serve students' need for flexible on- and off-ramps. Despite their best efforts, many community college students encounter off-campus obstacles that can block their path to completion. Responsive institutions that are able to provide these students with the resources necessary to get back on track will ultimately have success in serving the needs and boosting the outcomes of their students. Offering flexible financial aid and make-up course opportunities allows students to quickly and seamlessly get back on a path to completion.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

The Completion Imperative

INTRODUCTION

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

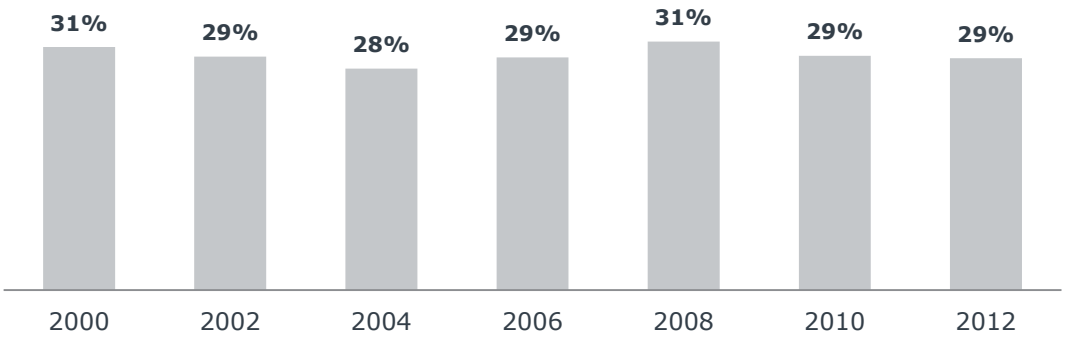
Running to Stand Still

Despite Significant Investment, Completion Rates Remain Stubbornly Flat

For several decades, community colleges have faced the challenge of stagnant completion rates. Despite significant investments in student success initiatives, graduation rates remain stubbornly flat. On average, less than one-third of community college students graduate within three years of enrolling. This trend is especially concerning given that performance-based funding initiatives continue to gain traction around the country. As of 2017, 33 states have established policies that tied community college funding to student outcomes, and 4 additional states are transitioning to such a model. In an age when institutional revenue is directly linked with student success, colleges must identify and address the critical barriers to student completion.

Completion Metrics Not Budging

NCES Three-Year Community College Graduation Rate, 2000-2012



Massive Investments Fail to Inflect Completion Outcomes

$2B+

Estimated annual spend on developmental education

$890M

California grant allocation for student success

Sources: National Conference of State Legislators, "Performance-Based Funding for Higher Education," July 2015, National Center for Education Statistics, "Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS)," *Datalab,* accessed June 7, 2017, Gordon L, "California 'Student Success' Initiative Slow to Increase Community College Completion Rates," EdSource, April 2017, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Serving an At-Risk Population

Growing Percentage of Students Associated with Stop-Out Attributes

As colleges confront the daunting task of improving student outcomes, many have pointed to the rapidly evolving student demographic as a contributor to low completion rates. While many institutional policies and practices assume that students fit the "traditional" full-time, recent high school graduate profile, the student population at community colleges is increasingly more diverse and vulnerable. The National Council on Education recently identified the student characteristics most closely linked with stop-outs, including part-time enrollment and first-generation college student status. Strikingly, a significant proportion of community college students possess at least one of these characteristics, highlighting the fact that colleges need to take a new approach to student success in order to better serve their rapidly changing student population.

Characteristics of Students Most Likely to Stop Out	**Enrollment Driven by Students from Highest-Risk Tiers**
Low-income	+91% *Growth in Pell Grant recipients enrolled in CCs, 2006-07 to 2011-12*
Full-time employment while enrolled	41% *Part-time students working full-time*
First-generation	36% *CC students who are first-generation*
Developmental education need	68% *CC students enrolled in at least one dev ed course*
Part-time enrollment	61% *Students enrolled part-time in Fall 2016*

The urgency of finding sustainable solutions is underscored by the fact that while the demographics of college students have shifted substantially—and in many cases, students arrive on campus with greater need—college leaders need to find ways to support these students with fewer resources than in previous years. For instance, community colleges have reported a 16% decline in enrollments since the end of the Great Recession. This dramatic decrease, coupled with reductions in state funding for higher education, means that community college budgets are tight. As a result, institutions are seeking ways to best serve their changing student population with fewer resources.

Sources: "New Pell Grant Numbers Trend Well for Community College Students," American Association of Community Colleges, September 11, 2012, "2014 Fact Sheet," American Association of Community Colleges, "What We Know About Development Education Outcomes," Community College Research Center, January 2014, "Enrollment and Employees in Post-Secondary Institutions, Fall 2015," National Center for Education Statistics, "Enrollment Estimates by Sector," American Association of Community Colleges, February 25, 2017, "Relying on State Funding," American Association of Community Colleges, September 20, 2017, EAB interviews and analysis.

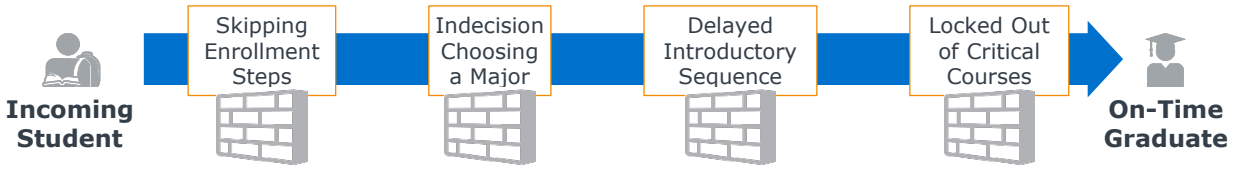
©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

A Problem of Our Own Making

Self-Inflicted Barriers Caused by Complex College Structures

External factors are not solely to blame for lackluster student outcomes, however, and in many cases institutional policies often act as barriers to student success, delaying timely completion by even the most diligent students. From an inability to locate valuable resources to a lack of understanding about the various steps they must complete in order to graduate, students often struggle to navigate the institution.

Common Roadblocks on Path to Graduation



Ideally, institutional procedures would be straightforward and clear, and colleges would offer comprehensive support as students navigate the experience. While a complete overhaul of institutional practices may be unrealistic, colleges should regularly conduct an internal audit of their services and policies to ensure that they are—at the very least—not causing unnecessary delays for students.

As the number of students arriving on campus from nontraditional backgrounds continues to grow, it's critical that they aren't left feeling overwhelmed and underserved by legacy policies. Colleges can avoid this by using the student perspective as the ultimate litmus test for campus practices, crafting policies that directly address the needs of their student population.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

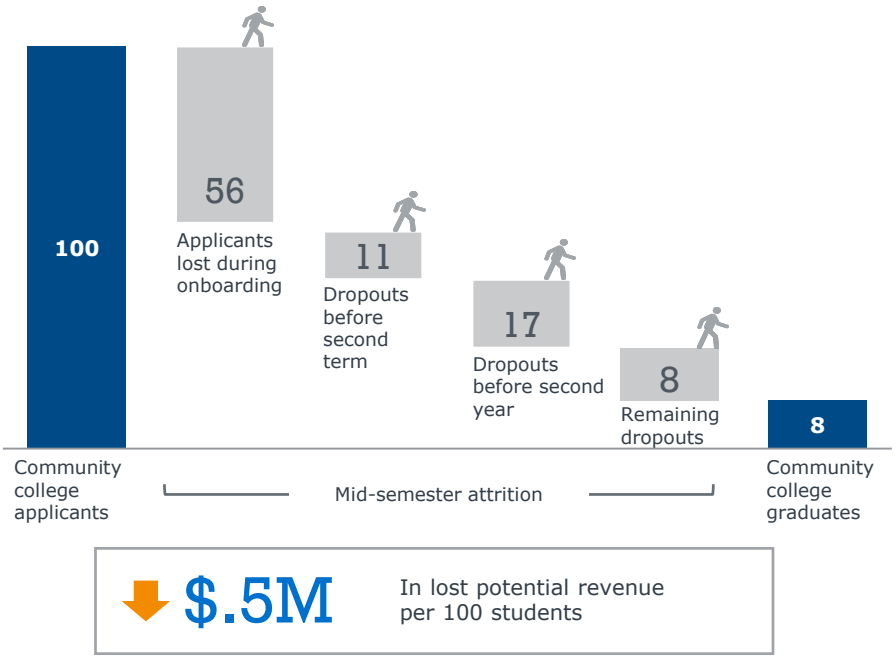
Sitting on the Sidelines Puts Revenue at Risk

Guided Pathways Can Reduce Attrition, Bolster Revenue

Beyond moral imperative, college leaders are seeing the leaky completion pipeline as a financial risk at a time of declining enrollments. As outlined by data collected from National Center for Education Statistics, a significant number of community college students stop out at each stage in the college process. This represents a threat not only to student outcomes but also to the college's bottom line, institutions lose an estimated $.5 million in revenue for every 100 students due to this attrition.

Community College Attrition Patterns

EAB Analysis of National IPEDS Data



Colleges recognize these threats and have largely turned to Guided Pathways reform as a means to bolster student success and institutional sustainability by restructuring the academic and support services they provide. While full-scale implementation remains a challenge for most institutions, many recognize that the comprehensive reform proposed by Guided Pathways presents the best opportunity to improve student and institutional outcomes.

The Pathways model focuses on revising curricular programming and support services in order to offer students structured guidance in their programs of choice. More specifically, Guided Pathways aims to reduce the overwhelming number of choices—including course and program options as well as career paths—students have to make by providing a more tailored pathway to completion based on student interests.

Sources: Complete College America, "Time Is the Enemy," Sept. 2011, Susie DePianto, "Helping prospective students make decisions about their future," The Keyword, Google, Sept. 30, 2016, National Conference of State Legislatures, "Performance-Based Funding for Higher Education," July 2015, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

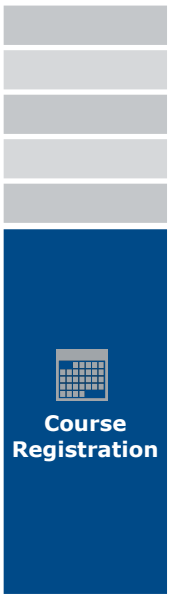
Elevating the Quality of Advice

Advising Dominated by Registration Instead of Student Goals

Guided Pathways reform is not complete without consideration of the advising model. Unfortunately, existing advising structures are inadequate or incomplete given that most interactions are still transactional, centered on course scheduling rather than on providing holistic and quality advice. Given the link between poor program selection, frequent major switching or indecision, and excess credit accumulation, any attempt to tackle student success must include improved guidance for students.

Advisors Traditionally Focused on Transactional Tasks…

Traditional Advising



…But Ideally Should Be Trained to Support Student Goals

Professional Advising

The good news is that as students transition to program pathways and select the prescribed course sequences, certain academic decisions—such as determining which courses to enroll in each semester—should be made more easily. As a result, meetings with academic advisors, which previously had been dominated by transactional tasks such as course registration, focus instead on more substantive conversations about students' academic and career goals. In order to conduct this work at scale, colleges need to rethink traditional formats of advising delivery.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

From Theory to Implementation

Unlike the conventional practices of recycling course schedules and relying on a "cafeteria model" of program selection, a Pathways-informed approach offers students predictability and guidance in the form of curricular maps that provide a clear route to completion. In an effort to identify the most effective strategies to implement such an approach, we aim to answer four key questions:

Key Questions	Conventional Wisdom	EAB Research Insight
Can we steer students toward productive credits while preserving exploration?	On-time completion at scale requires inflexible degree maps and restricted choice →	Effective program designs allow for exploration on the path to timely completion
Can we ensure seat availability without costly excess capacity?	Current schedule-setting practices are the easiest to implement →	Use of in-house data improves effectiveness of course scheduling for students and faculty
Can we improve our advisory delivery model without breaking the bank?	Increasing advising capacity is prohibitively expensive and time-consuming →	Comprehensive retraining can produce more substantive, student-centric interactions
Can we make offerings more flexible to match reality of students' lives?	Increasing time to degree is unavoidable for students who get off track →	Innovative scheduling provides students with opportunities to get back on track

In answering these questions, our research insights highlight a comprehensive solution that places student needs at the forefront and encourages the crafting of institutional practices to serve those needs. Specifically, we encourage colleges to provide students with clear routes to completion. Constructing effective pathways not only will improve academic outcomes but also will allow colleges to expand their course scheduling and advising functions to better support students. The strategies that we've uncovered in the present study are key to successful Guided Pathways implementation, offering college leaders the opportunity to promote long-lasting student success.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Designing Student-Centric Pathways

CHAPTER 1

- Tactic 1: Sticky Note Speed Sequencing
- Tactic 2: Crowdsourced Program Maps
- Tactic 3: Community-Endorsed Career Clusters
- Tactic 4: Expedited Course-Overlap Identifier
- Tactic 5: Jargon-Free Map Design

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

The Principles of Pathways Academic Reform

Balance Structure and Exploration with Program Design

In introducing Pathways academic reform, colleges need to strike a balance between exploration and structure within their curriculum. While bounded and rigid course sequences may provide the most direct route to completion, they fail to allow students the opportunity to explore various career and academic interests. At the same time, the traditional cafeteria model of course selection doesn't offer enough structure to support students in their decision-making and often leads to students feeling overwhelmed and uninformed. Guided Pathways theory outlines a way of achieving an optimal balance between structure and exploration by introducing two curricular components: program maps and meta-majors.

Parsing Theory into Practice

"In Guided Pathways colleges, faculty **clearly map out academic programs to create educationally coherent pathways**, each with clearly defined learning outcomes that build across the curriculum and are aligned with requirements for further education and career advancement in the given field. **Students who enter without clear program or career goals are assisted in choosing a broad initial field of interest.**"

Thomas Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins,
Redesigning America's Community Colleges

Program Maps
Provide clarity on the sequence of courses necessary to complete a program of study at a college, using the most direct route possible

Meta-Majors
Clustered programs with shared course requirements allow for structured exploration with minimal excess credit accumulation

Desired Transfer or Career Outcome

Program maps, which chart out the exact sequence of courses necessary to complete a major, offer students structure in the form of a clear and direct path to graduation. Meta-majors, which group related programs into clusters based on career and academic outcomes, allow for student exploration within a given field of interest without excess credit accumulation. Colleges that embed these frameworks into their curriculum offer students the option of exploring the variety of academic offerings on a college campus without inadvertently causing them to delay their time to completion. As a result, students who progress through a pathway receive a comprehensive education in a manner that encourages timely completion.

Sources: Cathy Cleek, "Executive Sponsorship," State of California Franchise Tax Board, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Initial Program-Map Course Inclusion Rules

Hierarchy of Student-Centric Design Requirements

Traditionally, many colleges begin the program-mapping process by rolling over existing institutional requirements. However, they soon run into the problem of trying to make them "fit" with stricter external mandates, such as those issued by governmental or accrediting bodies. By instead beginning with the least flexible constraints and then moving to the most flexible, colleges can significantly reduce the frustration that accompanies program sequencing.

Relying on a structured design hierarchy not only improves mapping efficiency but also guarantees that program maps ultimately serve student goals, which may include transferring to a four-year institution or entering the local workforce. Embedding requirements informed by these goals early on in the mapping process ensures that the college maintains a student-centric focus. However, this also requires that colleges be intentional about their inclusion of existing institutional requirements, and keep in mind that the maps that are most effective may require a significant departure from the status quo.

See Tool 1 on page 60 for guidance on how to implement the program-mapping process.

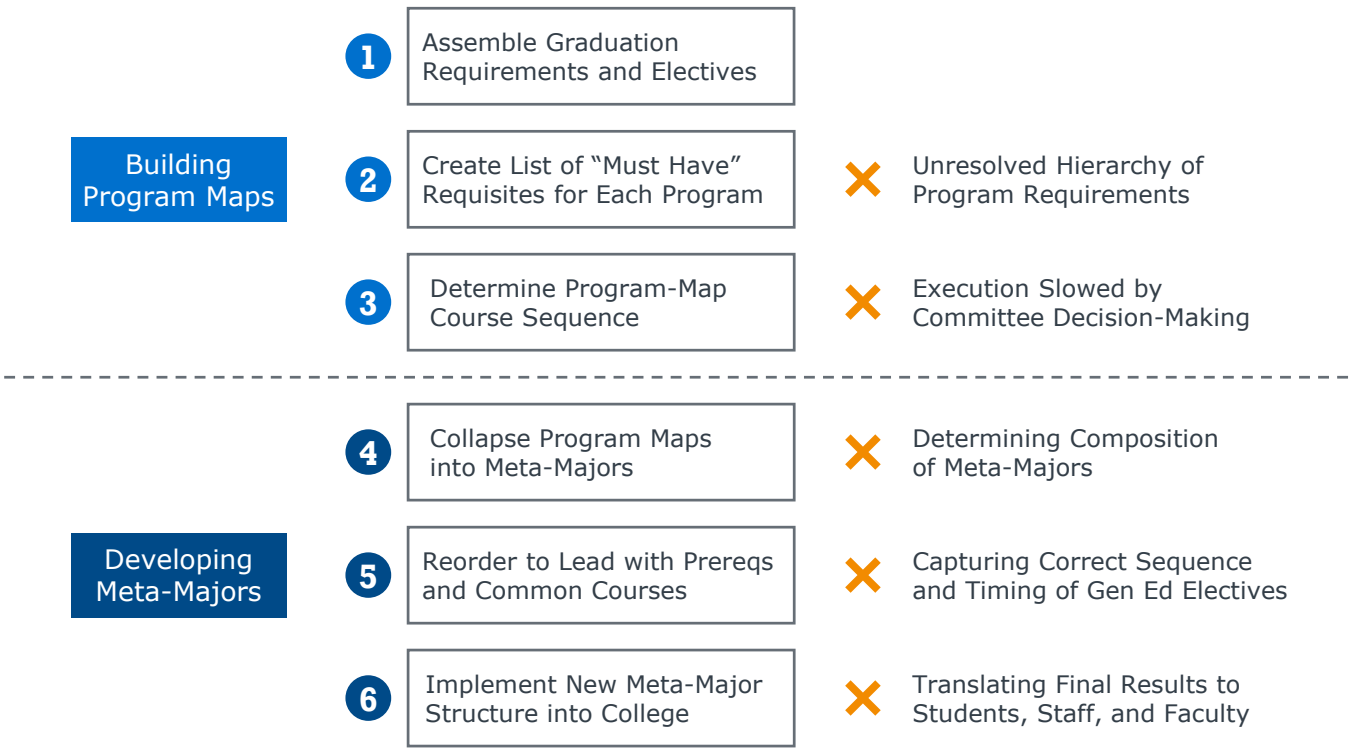
Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Avoid Common Trip Wires

Anticipating Pitfalls When Constructing Program Maps and Meta-Majors

Aside from program-map composition, one of the other key challenges that administrators face at every stage of curricular reform is that of creating consensus amongst decision-makers. Committee members come to the table with different priorities, which can result in indefinite delays and unresolved conflict. Outlined below are the concrete stages involved in constructing program maps and meta-majors. At nearly every stage, potential pitfalls arise as priorities clash and communication across departmental silos is limited.



An ideal program-mapping process would involve a few individuals who would share the same overarching goals. However, constructing an effective program map requires detailed knowledge of course content, program prerequisites, and externally mandated requirements, information that is often housed in different departments across campus. As a result, administrators need to engage a variety of players in the mapping process.

To avoid conflicts that arise from differing perspectives and priorities, colleges need a method of soliciting critical input without sacrificing mapping efficiency.

See Tool 2 on page 61 for strategies to cascade engagement in Guided Pathways reform throughout campus.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Efficient Creation of Program Sequences

Timed Cross-Department Mapping Session

Mapping committees at **St. Petersburg College** use sticky notes to physically map out potential sequences, balancing transparency and efficiency. Committees include a small but diverse sample of faculty and staff, in order to ensure that program maps contain the requisite content, general education, and prerequisite courses. During mapping sessions, committee members write the name of each course on a sticky note and then collectively sketch out program maps using their shared knowledge. This allows for revisions to be made quickly and transparently and a consensus to be reached in a timely manner.

SPC St. Petersburg College

Small Group Balances Efficiency with Cross-Institutional Knowledge

Create Program Sticky Notes
Write the name of each potential program course on individual sticky notes, indicate if pre-requisite, core, or state-mandated course

Select Program Courses
Discuss best program courses and most appropriate general education courses, then eliminate toxic course combinations

Sequence Program Courses
Use sticky notes and committee members' combined institutional knowledge to create optimal program-map sequences

Just the Right Number of Cooks

Committee Composition

- 5 – 10 Faculty
- Dean
- Advisor
- Student Support

Student-Centered Curricula in Just Two Hours

3–9 Hidden credits found per program on average

64 Number of program maps completed in three months

On average, it takes committees just two hours to map out a single program, and the staff at St. Petersburg was able to create 64 different program maps in the span of a single summer. This represents a significant increase in efficiency and also promotes the sharing of information across departments.

The administration was also able to reduce the number of hidden credits in each program by using this system, thus cutting down on the time it takes students to complete a program.

See Tool 3 on page 62 for a checklist to be used while planning and implementing a speed sequencing session.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Identifying a Leader for the Mapping Process

Natural Power Struggles Emerge in Academic-Led Map-Building

Though faculty committees can prove efficient in mapping program sequences, conflicts over committee leadership can pose residual challenges. Faculty tend to advocate for the courses they teach, often without considering the broader aims of the program. They also have a limited understanding of the general education and prerequisite courses included in their program. On the other hand, deans are often unfamiliar with the content knowledge provided by all of the courses within their departments and struggle to optimize program efficiency while maintaining departmental morale.

Current Ownership Limitations to Mapping Process

Faculty Skeptical of Change

- Misalignment between individual incentives and best choice for program
- Tension between personal experience and entrenched program norms
- Lack of knowledge about prerequisite courses to include

Dean Incentives Misaligned

- Tension between optimizing program sequence and decline in division size
- Fear of appearing biased by prioritizing certain classes or faculty over others
- Hard to distill current state of programs within their division

Risks of Solely Faculty-Led or Dean-Led Approach

- Loss of buy-in by creating us vs. them
- Favor either strategic input or deep subject matter expertise
- Loss of historical employer input and feedback
- Risk of excluding critical courses for program accreditation requirements

Traditional approaches to curricular development often result in a single faction being charged to lead, resulting in suboptimal program development and diminished engagement across the board. Therefore, effective program mapping must allow for shared ownership of the sequencing process across campus knowledge bases.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Building Consensus with Broader Involvement

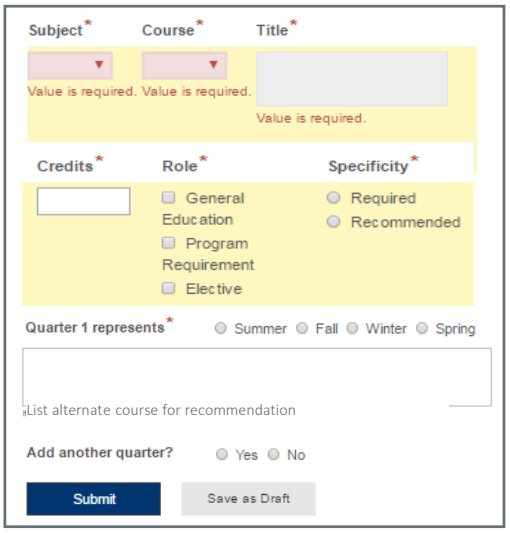
Online Program-Map Designer Enables Campus-Wide Input

Linn-Benton Community College relies on a crowdsourcing technique to elicit participation in program-map construction across campus. Using a simple web tool that has program courses preloaded, Linn-Benton faculty are invited to submit proposed program maps to advising staff, who use this input to construct the final maps. This allows for widespread participation in the mapping process while avoiding the contentious question of who will "lead."

Linn-Benton COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Online Tool Democratizes Participation

Abridged Screenshot of Linn-Benton's Program Map Designer



LINN-BENTON.

Design Process Contained Within Online Portal

- One member of institutional research creates program-map templates using online portal
- Course catalog uploaded to online portal for faculty to use for map creation
- Drop-down option created for all courses to use with template program maps
- Text field allows faculty to suggest alternative courses based on program knowledge

Faculty have the option of constructing part-time (9 credits) and full-time (15 credits) maps, as well as offering alternative course suggestions in an open-field text box. This flexible and easily implemented format gives all faculty at the college the opportunity to be involved in the program-mapping process and to leverage their program-specific knowledge.

See Tool 4 on page 63 for a guide on how to build an online map-submission tool.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

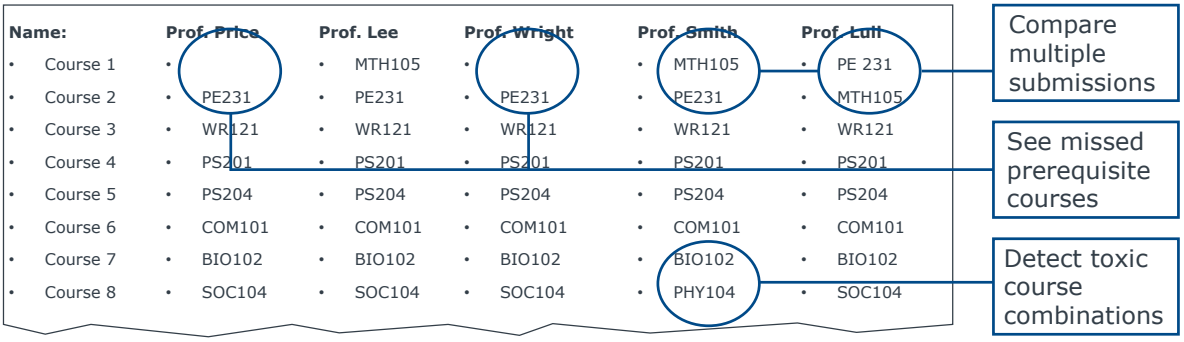
Online Entries Allow Map-Quality Assurance

Creating Broad-Based Academy Support for Program Maps

Once faculty have submitted their program maps, advisors quickly and easily compare across submissions and make adjustments in cases of missing prerequisites or toxic course combinations. They communicate these changes to faculty, in order to better share programmatic knowledge and advance communication across departmental silos. Then, using the crowdsourced data, advisors create program maps that meet the requirements of the major while incorporating faculty content knowledge.

Faculty Submission Prior to Advisor Revisions

Hypothetical Political Science Crowdsourced Map Submission



Crowdsourced Maps Enable Efficient Curricular Review

Modifiable fields for 9- and 12-credit maps

Drop-down menu to list all college courses

Aggregated view to make map adjustments

100+ Faculty map submissions received in Fall 2016

In the first semester the tool was launched, Linn-Benton received over 100 faculty map submissions, substantially increasing their levels of participation in program design. Use of the mapping tool also provided faculty the benefit of an in-depth look into the typical student experience in their program and a broader understanding of the potential challenges and pain points their students may face within the program.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

What Is a Meta-Major?

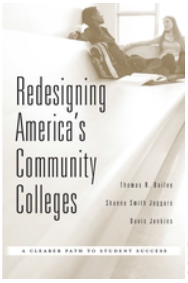
Breaking Down the Definition into Functional Parts

While program maps are easily defined by a bounded sequence of courses designed to provide students structure, meta-majors achieve a different goal—namely, exploration—and are sometimes more tricky to define. Bailey, Jaggars, and Jenkins provide a clear and intuitive definition in *Redesigning America's Community Colleges*:

Giving Meta-Majors Meaning

> "[Meta-majors are] ...default areas of study grouped by common disciplinary areas that exposes students to educational and career options within broad fields."

Thomas Bailey, Shanna Smith Jaggars, and Davis Jenkins, *Redesigning America's Community Colleges*



Meta-Majors Solve Two (Noncompeting) Goals

1 | Link Students to Careers

Naming convention for students to quickly understand link between career clusters and program of choice

2 | Create College's Academic Framework

Clustering of related majors to minimize excess credits if a student switches majors within a related field

This definition provides colleges with two concrete goals that all meta-majors should ideally achieve. First, through intuitive naming conventions, meta-majors should easily map onto career opportunities in the community. Second, they should maximize the amount of shared content within program clusters to allow students to make major switches within a meta-major without accumulating excess credits.

Several internal and external factors, including faculty preferences and legislation, have traditionally contributed to the naming conventions adopted at community colleges. Unfortunately for students and stakeholders, these conventions were not always aligned with institutional goals or easily mapped onto opportunities at the college and in the community. With the introduction of meta-majors, Guided Pathways institutions have the opportunity to reimagine their naming practices in order to better communicate with college stakeholders.

Sources: Bailey, Thomas R et al., *Redesigning America's Community Colleges, A Clearer Path to Student Success (*Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Localizing Curriculum Changes

Community-Endorsed Career Clusters Create Clarity

Jackson College in Michigan proactively involved on-campus and community stakeholders in the meta-major formation process, ensuring that their offerings were informative and easy to understand. Administrators at Jackson invited stakeholders to campus, and through a series of interviews, gained insight into the competencies most desired by local employers. From these interviews, they extracted three essential competencies and created six clearly defined meta-majors around these competencies.

Community Interviews Produce Employer-Friendly Competencies

Jackson College

Identify Stakeholders

- **On Campus**
  Targeted current students, faculty, and past review participants
- **Community**
  Spoke to employers, alumni, advisory board members, and other community leaders

Conduct Interviews

- **Interview Training**
  Outside consultant trained Gen Ed team how to elicit quality responses
- **Campus Invitations**
  Invited approximately 300 stakeholders for lunch and dinner sessions

Workshop Results

- **Gap Analysis**
  Gen Ed's 15-member team judges where curriculum fails to meet common feedback
- **Revised Names**
  Produced three essential competencies all students must acquire

Gathering Community Input

Concise Format
Limit to six questions and cap conversation at 60 minutes

Internal vs. External
Ask internal groups about academics and employers about skills

Longitudinal Change
Compare responses to past outreach to ensure progress

Jackson administrators identified three key lessons from their community engagement efforts. First, interviews with stakeholders should be concise and to the point. Second, to ensure that diverse perspectives are represented, both internal and external stakeholders should be consulted. Finally, it's critical to reassess responses on a regular basis, in order to track progress.

Jackson found that involving community stakeholders in the naming process was an easy way to be sure that their offerings were aligned with workforce needs. The revised meta-majors also provided clarity to incoming students who could easily map program titles to career opportunities.

See Tool 5 on pages 64–65 for a community interview primer.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Meta-Major Consensus Process More Complex

Meta-Major Courses (and Opinions) Multiply with Number of Stakeholders

Although collective input is beneficial to meta-major construction, soliciting input from several sources can lead to a clash in priorities and perspectives. Because multiple programs exist within a single meta-major, the number of people—including faculty, administrators, and student support staff—involved in the construction process has the potential to be much greater.

Program-Map Options Offer Limited Amount of Choices…

- Focus on single program restricts number of faculty and incents cooperation
- No overlapping course content or competing priorities across programs
- Limited complexity to creation since courses are sequential

…But Meta-Major Process Exponentially Harder

- Programs in meta-major
- Faculty teaching individual courses
- Academic leaders
- Student services pathways leaders

↓

- Hundreds of possible outcomes

In these situations, colleges can quickly run into a "too many cooks in the kitchen" problem, where competing priorities and differing perspectives result in a near-infinite list of possible program combinations, stalling the process indefinitely. Colleges looking to avoid these sorts of delays must find a solution to meta-major construction which—similar to program mapping—balances the need for breadth of knowledge with operational efficiency. Additionally, they need to ensure that their construction process aligns with the goal of providing students with the opportunity for maximum exploration within their area of interest.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Quick Pattern Recognition Ensures Transferability

Data Query Determines Courses and Sequences

Colleges looking to bypass disagreements about meta-major composition should consider approaches that rely on easily accessed program data to construct curriculum maps. At Jackson College, a series of student information system (SIS) data queries determines the frequency of each course within meta-major programs. This information is then used to construct curriculum maps that place the highest-frequency courses for programs within a meta-major in the first semester, allowing students to potentially switch programs without accumulating extra credits.

Jackson College

Measure Which Classes Overlap Most Often

Screenshot of Liberal Arts Meta-Major Data

Percentage of meta-major students in program

Programs in meta-major

Liberal Arts			
		41.80%	1.40%
	Class	arts.aa	grde.aas
66.20%	ADO 10	G	
88.60%	MAT 139	G	G
87.00%	ADO 4	G	G
75.70%	ADO 4	G	
87.00%	PSY 140	G	G

Percentage of courses required by meta-major

Indication of program requirement

Sequencing Ensures Highest Volume of Productive Credits

- Curriculum map sequence **prioritizes highest-frequency courses within meta-major**, places them in first semester
- **Student decision point set by most common semesters as possible based** on the program requirements within each meta-major

3+ Additional months of major exploration time

20% Decrease in advisor navigation questions

Jackson also uses the data it collects to set major decision points, ideally after as many common semesters as possible. On average, this has allowed students an additional three months to explore programs within a meta-major without accruing excess credits. It also has led to a significant decrease in advisor meetings dedicated to answering navigation questions, freeing up advisors to have more substantive conversations with students.

See Tool 6 on page 66 for the necessary steps to identify course overlap within meta-majors.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Do You Speak Guided Pathways?

Embed Pathways into College Communications and Operations

While implementing curricular changes is a fundamental aspect of Guided Pathways, it's important to also consider how these changes are communicated to stakeholders, students, and community members. Guided Pathways brings along with it an entirely new vocabulary and student-facing websites, and social media pages are often slow to incorporate this new language, causing unnecessary confusion.

Seemingly Foreign Language

Guided Pathways Terminology

Pathway	Course sequence
Meta-Major	Term
Credit hours	Liberal arts
Milestone course	Program map
Semester	Developmental

Conflicting Student-Facing Language

Lagging Website Descriptions Confuse Students

1. Website not updated with current number of pathways
2. Website and course catalog present different information
3. Website describes Guided Pathways reforms in administrative language

Undoing Decades of Culture

"With Guided Pathways reforms, you need to realize that you're trying to reverse about 50 years of practice, ideas, expectations, not to mention daily habit and work. This is a seismic shift in culture."

Samuel Hirsch, Vice President of Student Affairs, Community College of Philadelphia

Simple language that is consistent across all student-facing portals is key to ensuring that students are actively engaged in the Pathways process. While academic or administrative jargon is often the norm on many campus portals, the goal of colleges should be to communicate the many benefits of Pathways reform to their students in a way that is accessible to all.

Sources: William Erickson, Sharon Trerirse, et al. "The Accessibility and Usability of College Websites: Is Your Website Presenting Barriers to Potential Students?" *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 2013, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Create a Clear Vision of Completion

Jargon-Free Maps Minimize Confusion, Ensure Clarity for Students

Middlesex Community College uses a visually appealing and jargon-free template to present Pathways to students, advisors, and faculty. Their interactive checklist provides students with a view of an entire program map with program requirements clearly labeled and course names presented in simple terms. This easy-to-navigate platform gives students a clear picture of what is required for completion and allows them to track their own progress through a given program.

Simplified Maps Enable Easier Self-Navigation

Abridged Screenshot of MCC Business Program Map

Milestone Markers Create Clarity

1. Indicate a clear start and end point
2. Denote essential degree-advancing courses
3. List course names in simple terms
4. Adopt colors consistent with college brand

12% Percentage of reduced advising errors since maps launched in 2015

Administrators at Middlesex have found that implementing this new template has greatly improved their advising function, reducing advising errors by 12% since its launch. This frees up advisors' time to focus on assisting students in developing long-term academic and career goals.

Using a graphical template with informal language also eliminates the confusing process of sifting through jargon-filled pages and gives students an immediate overview of their designated pathways. The opportunity to "check off" completed requirements also acts as a motivational tool for students, as they are able to track their degree progress.

See Tools 7 and 8 on pages 67–69 for resources to create clear and jargon-free program maps.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Aligning Course Capacity to Student Demand

CHAPTER 2

- Tactic 6: Registration-Based Schedule Predictor
- Tactic 7: Guaranteed Course Schedule
- Tactic 8: Future-Demand Retraining Grants
- Tactic 9: Completion-Based Registration Rules

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Another Wrench in the Works

Course Scheduling Already Incredibly Complex Before Guided Pathways

College leaders often struggle to fully appreciate students' scheduling needs and oftentimes feel like they have little idea of the courses that students want or when they want them. The daunting task of planning for student demand while balancing logistic limitations leads many colleges to simply replicate their previous year's calendar.

Two Questions Seemingly Impossible to Answer…

1 *What Courses Do Students Want?*

Hard to Predict
Unstructured course progression prevents downstream predictions

2 *When Do Students Want Them?*

Shifting Preferences
Students frequently change their registrations until the deadline

Multiple Competing Demands
Registrar offices must also balance faculty and space availability

…So Many Just "Roll Over" Last Year's Calendar

✓ Convenient for faculty

✗ No window into student demand

> "We've had an excellent assessment of our master schedule, but our biggest issue is so many of our students register late. It's hard to plan if we don't know they'll be here."
>
> *Kimberley Collins*
> *Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs, Monroe Community College*

The difficulty of understanding student preferences is twofold. For one, students tend to enter community college with unrefined program preferences, leading them to put off registration. Administrators, on the other hand, are tasked with managing a complex set of demands when determining course schedules, including facilities, teaching schedules, and enrollment projections. Unfortunately, the conflict between these competing priorities has prompted striking enrollment mismatch: based on a 2016 survey, 63% of community college course sections were found to be either under-enrolled (i.e., with fill rates below 70%) or over-enrolled (i.e., with fill rates above 95%).

Pathways-reform efforts present an opportunity to make the schedule more predictable for both students and faculty. Drawing a clear academic plan for students from enrollment to graduation makes scheduling habits easier to predict, allowing administrators to schedule courses further in advance and with greater reliability.

See Tool 9 on pages 70–71 for a planning guide to convene student focus groups.

Sources: Ad Astra's 2016 Higher Education Scheduling Index, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Determine What Courses You Need Each Term

Use Pathways Maps to Anticipate Future Enrollment

Monroe Community College uses their curricular maps, along with student enrollment data, to inform the master schedule. This scheduling strategy takes into account students' progress within a particular program, as well as current and historical registration rates, in order to predict course demand with a high degree of accuracy.

Monroe Community College
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Pair Maps and Registration Data to Predict Downstream Demand

1. **Upload Degree Maps into SIS:** Each map stored in Degree Works so any office or department can access the information
2. **Query SIS to Find Enrollment:** Automated report pulls number of students who have not completed each course within each degree map
3. **Add Flex Capacity:** Registrar adds "shadow sections" or surplus sections to scheduling platform to match hypothetical registration need

Shows Where They'll Register Next

Hypothetical Seat Projection for Chemistry

Course Sequence	Enrolled Ratio	Needed Seats
CHE 151 General College Chemistry I	1,452/ 1,788	336
CHE 152 General College Chemistry II	1,377/ 1,788	411
CHE 251 Organic Chemistry I	1,001/ 1,788	787
CHE 252 Organic Chemistry II	324/ 1,788	1464

To execute this process, an administrator runs an SIS query during the open registration period to determine how many students are enrolled in a course, as well as their progress within their program. Then, to predict demand, a second query shows the registration numbers for that course on the same date one year prior, the enrollment on the first day of class the prior year, and the enrollment at the census date the prior year. Results from these queries are shared with the department chairs so they can determine the need for additional sections of a course.

Additionally, Monroe creates course offerings within the registration system that are initially invisible to students. If the visible sections fill up, these "shadow sections" become available. This provides the college with sufficient course capacity regardless of how many students persist term to term.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Scheduling Breakdowns Stall Student Progress

Students Frustrated by Scheduling Variability and Changes

Nearly half of community college students work more than 20 hours per week, and they are more than twice as likely to be parents than their peers in four-year institutions. The extra life-demands placed on community college students means that trying to accommodate inflexible and often unpredictable course offerings is frustrating, and at times even impossible. For these students, scheduling barriers reflect more than simply a procedural headache and can act as a serious barrier to long-term success.

Courses Already Filled

- Students find essential courses have already reached enrollment cap

Lack of Predictable Offerings

- Working students unable to schedule beyond one term

Last-Minute Cancellations

- Courses do not meet fill rate and canceled at the last minute

Underappreciated Completion Barrier

Students Must Wait a Year

- Gateway courses not offered every term so students must delay degree progression

As a result of unpredictable schedules or course bottlenecks, students are often forced to delay progress through their program, resulting in excess credit accumulation and deferred completion. If colleges can remove some of these barriers to scheduling, they can encourage rather than impede students' progress.

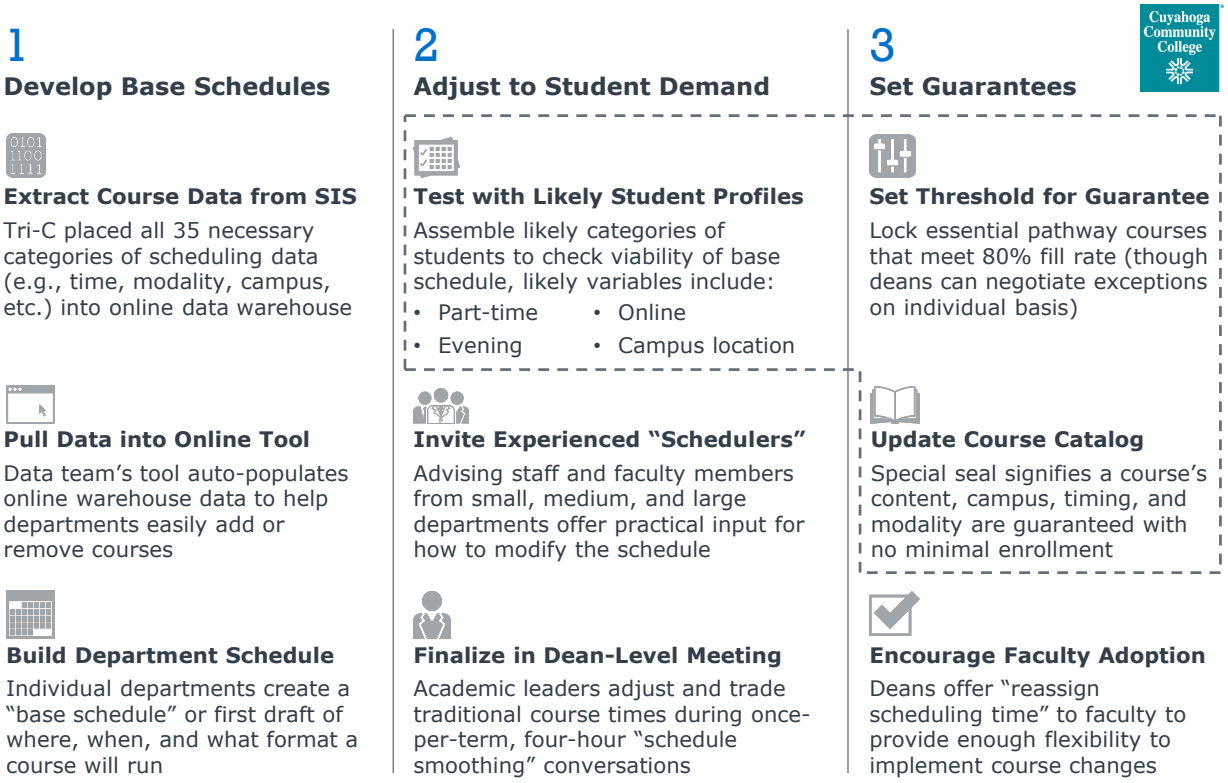
Sources: www.ccsse.org/docs/Making_Ends_Meet.pdf, DataPoints 2017, www.aacc.nche.edu/Publications/datapoints/Documents/DataPoints_July_10.pdf, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Relying on Data to Meet Students' Scheduling Needs

Three-Step Process Ensures 18-Month Schedule Stability

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) leverages course-level enrollment data to create a guaranteed course schedule across multiple terms based on student and faculty demand. This system relies on existing student information to construct schedules, the viability of which are then tested using various student profiles (e.g., part-time status). Course modality, time of day, and campus location information are all considered as factors that may discourage student registration and are adjusted based on target student needs.



Three strategies are critically important in making this process effective. First, administrators must understand which student profiles their institution serves and consider how particular scheduling decisions may impact them differentially. Next, administrators set a threshold for the guarantee, which determines exactly how many students must enroll in order to offer the course as promised.

Finally, administrators emphasize the importance of communicating which courses are guaranteed and exactly what a "guaranteed course" means in the context of the academic catalog. This includes specifying the modality, campus, and timing of guaranteed courses so that students can be informed of what to expect in future terms and plan accordingly.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Clarifying More Than Just Course Times

Predictable Schedules Cause Fewer Dropped Classes

Tri-C's approach simplified the complicated, multilayered task of scheduling into a single streamlined process. The practice also revealed extraneous course sections and demonstrated to faculty the value of the curricular and scheduling structure introduced by Guided Pathways in improving student success outcomes.

Unexpected Institutional Benefits of Guaranteed Schedule

- Consolidated outdated legacy systems into single process
- Discovered and eliminated excess course sections
- Illustrated concrete impact of pathways reforms to faculty
- Helped to secure adjunct instructors further in advance

Moving Toward Schedule Certainty

Outcomes Captured Between 2015 and 2016

60%
Percentage of guaranteed classes 18 months in advance

4.1%
Drop in canceled classes

Pillar of Stability for At-Risk Students

> "Beyond the quantitative impact, we're hearing from advisors that students are feeling more certain about their nonacademic schedules. The key variable is life uncertainty and a guaranteed schedule is a great way to reduce that for our students."

J. Michael Thompson, East Campus President, Cuyahoga Community College

As a result of this new process, Tri-C is able to guarantee over half of their classes 18 months in advance, providing greater scheduling predictability for students. The college has also seen a drop in the number of classes canceled, as administrators are able to foresee which courses will be in demand. Particularly encouraging to administrators, students have also reported feeling greater certainty in their extracurricular schedules, as concerns about their academic schedules are alleviated.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Teaching Supply Lags Behind Pathways Demand

Pathways-Led Changes to Enrollment Costs Institution

Beyond anticipating student course registration needs, it is critical for institutions to anticipate how these needs impact demand for on-campus resources, including instructors. For example, presenting "default electives" within program maps nudges students toward a contained set of choices instead of the multitude of options they are often given to choose from. By pre-populating registration fields with default course options, institutions can increase the predictability of student demand for those courses.

Bottlenecks Arise from Demand Mismatch…

Sample Instructor Assignment, Related Disciplines

Program	Sociology	Psychology
Pre-pathways enrollment	800	1100
Post-pathways enrollment	675	1300
Current instructors	14	18
Needed instructors	-2	+3

…But Cannot Easily Adjust Full-Time Faculty Teaching Supply

Faculty not trained or licensed to teach in new discipline

Faculty unwilling or unable to finance training themselves

Faculty do not want to enter new field unrelated to experience

Even Single Mismatch Can Add Up Quickly

$14K Average cost per course not taught by full-time faculty[1] + **$3K** Average cost for adjunct

However, this approach has also had the effect of increasing enrollment in these default courses, which creates a subsequent staffing challenge, especially for colleges with high ratios of full-time faculty. Instructors may not be interested or able to seek additional training for a newly populated discipline, and the cost of hiring additional adjunct instructors is often prohibitively high.

1) Assumes $72,000 median salary and 15-credit course load.

Sources: Bellafante G, "Raising Ambitions: The Challenge in Teaching at Community Colleges," *The New York Times,* Dec. 19, 2014, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Repositioning Pathway-Displaced Faculty

Retraining Grants Help Full-Time Faculty Adjust to New Course Demand

This staffing challenge results from curriculum mapping, meta-major creation, and scheduling changes that require faculty to alter their daily work habits and, in some cases, displace the need for their expertise. **Sinclair Community College** leveraged their prior experience with developmental education reform to proactively assess and retrain their faculty to accommodate shifting course demands.

Learning from Past Reform Experience

"Since we started developmental education reform about ten years ago, enrollment dropped by 75%. When we started Guided Pathways reform, **we knew that we needed to take proactive steps to minimize faculty displacement in response to curriculum and scheduling change**."

Kathleen Cleary
Associate Provost
for Student Completion
Sinclair Community College

Steps for Offering Retraining Grants

Check Licensure
Some faculty already possess the right credential to teach in-demand discipline

Determine Minimum Training
Identify the necessary courses faculty need to take to teach in new discipline

Pay for Graduate Course Work
Encourage faculty to take course work at closest four-year institution

EAB Estimate for Retraining Savings

$1.5K Average saved per course vs. hiring an adjunct

Administrators reviewed existing faculty credentials as well as the amount and cost of retraining required to equip them to teach related disciplines. They found that the cost of hiring new adjuncts to meet shifting enrollment needs was higher than the cost of additional training for their current faculty. Their solution was to pay for faculty to receive relevant training in their new discipline from an area four-year institution. This approach ultimately saved the college money, removed the cost burden of retraining from faculty members, and ensured that institutional capacity for offering default electives accommodated enrollment data.

See Tool 10 on page 72 for a calculator to help you determine faculty retraining costs.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

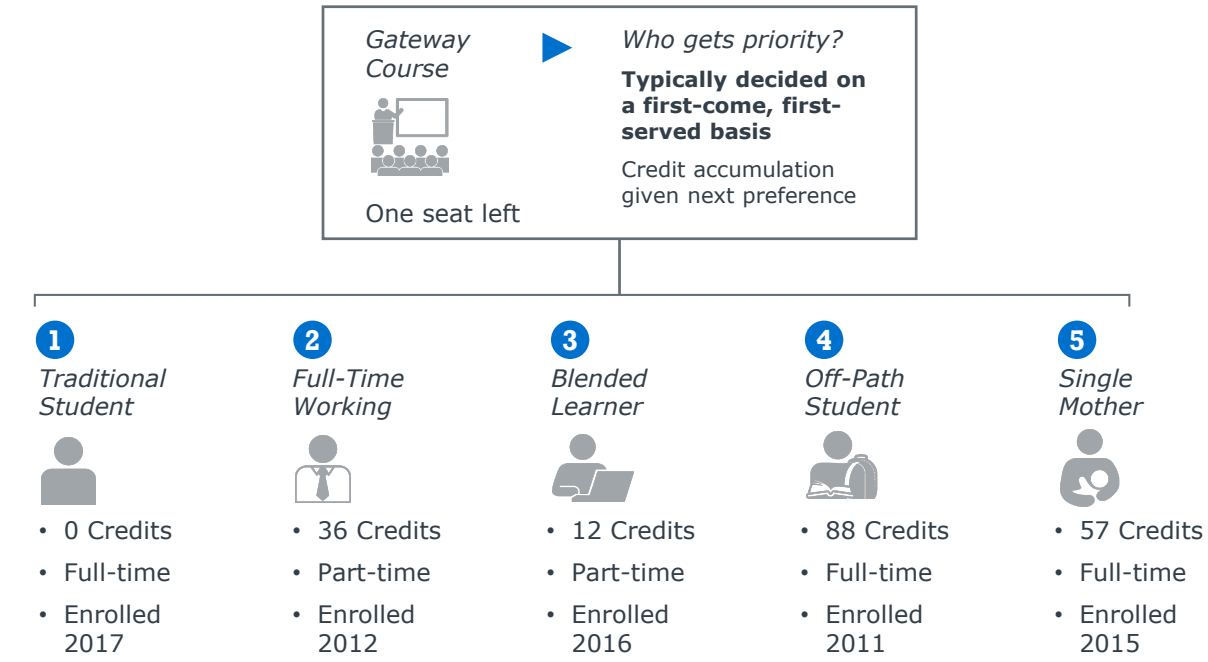
New Fairness Criteria Needed for Wait List

Pre-Pathway Students Now Compete with Pathways Students for Seats

Due to capacity constraints, even when colleges redistribute instructor and space resources to best meet student demand, there are still some students who are unable to register for courses they need. Most institutions have ad hoc or one-off ways to prioritize student registration, but failing to systematically respond to increased demand can create enrollment bottlenecks and delay students' progress.

Variety of Students Need Same Gateway Courses

Order and Profile of Student Registering for Essential Pathway Course



A first-come, first-served approach, or one that prioritizes only credit accumulation, fails to take into account the quality of accumulated credits, which could put some students at an unintended disadvantage. In these systems, for instance, students who have accumulated excess credits but may not be close to program completion are prioritized over students who are nearing completion with few extraneous credits.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

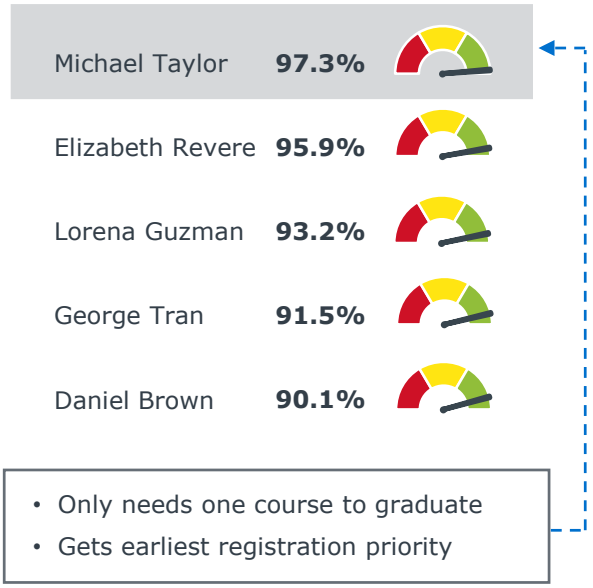
Taking Lessons from Four-Year Pathways

Assign Priority by Pathway Completion, Not Pure Credits

Administrators at **California Polytechnic State University** instituted a comprehensive prioritization system to ensure students are able to get into urgently needed courses. Their approach prioritizes credits needed for completion—rather than overall credit accumulation—so that students who are furthest along in a program are given the earliest registration dates and times. This encourages students to earn productive credits and rewards them for making progress toward completion.

Registration Priority Assigned by Academic Plan Completion

Closest to Completion Gets Registration Priority



Helping Students and Administrators Track Progress

Easy-to-Read Progress Meter

Academic progress speedometer reflects percentage of degree-applicable credit completed to date

Student-Segmented Dashboards

Administrators, advisors, and faculty can monitor the progress of individual students and classes

Hosted in Web-Based Dashboard

PolyData Dashboards use an Oracle platform to store, aggregate, and display degree-progress data

Administrators developed an online dashboard where students can view a meter that tracks their degree progress. This indicator serves as a light nudge to students to consider how their course plans contribute to their completion goals, while the priority registration window serves as a short-term reward for achieving those goals. The registrar uses this data to assign registration and wait-list priority so students nearing completion can quickly graduate.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Fostering Goal-Based Student Decision Making

CHAPTER 3

- Tactic 10: Campus-Wide Directed Decision Days
- Tactic 11: First-Year Pathway Exposure Course
- Tactic 12: Professional Goal-Setting Advisors
- Tactic 13: Competitive-Major Stop-Out Campaign

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Getting the Runaround

Siloed Advising Knowledge Deters Students from Seeking Guidance

For students, finding the right answer to their career and academic questions presents a distinct set of challenges. While advising functions have traditionally been separated from the classroom experience, this leaves students frustrated with the time and hassle of getting advice both from campus advisors and faculty members.

Answers in Different Locations Add Time and Confusion

Students Must Make Separate Appointments to Tap Distinct Knowledge Sources

Advisor Knowledge

- Provides information about registration, transfer, and other college policies
- Refers questions about financial aid and other common student services

Student Constraints

- ✕ **Time:** Commuting and working students unable to make appointments
- ✕ **Knowledge:** New students may not know of advisor function
- ✕ **Confidence:** Many students feel intimidated asking for help

Faculty Knowledge

- Answers questions about academic and course-specific concerns
- Shares insights about possible career options and the employer landscape

Further, many community college students build stronger relationships with faculty than they do with advisors and miss opportunities to integrate faculty's specific program and career expertise with advisors' understanding of transfer requirements, scheduling, and other noncognitive barriers. Institutions need a way to bridge the knowledge gap between academic and student affairs to provide students the guidance they need when they need it most.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

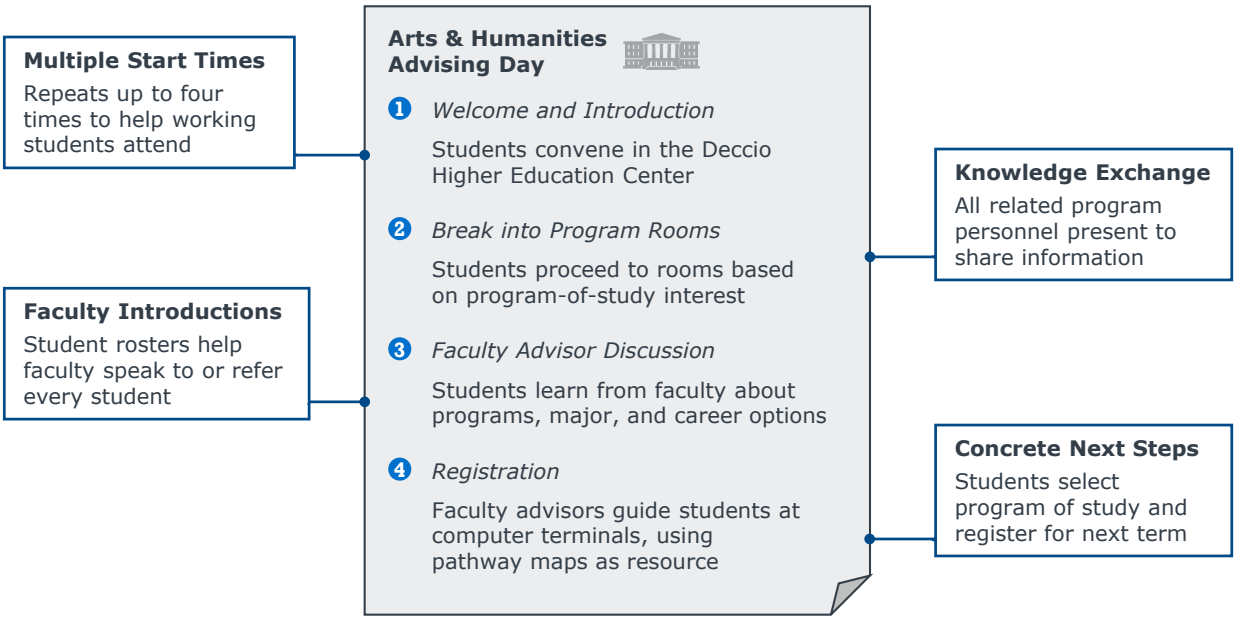
Right Place, Right Time

All-Day Advising Event Aggregates Advisor and Faculty Advice

Yakima Valley Community College combined faculty academic content knowledge and advisor career guidance during a daylong, campus-wide event to help students pick a meta-major or major depending on their degree progress. The event replaces one instructional day several weeks before the next term's registration deadline, giving students sufficient time to revise their schedules as needed.

Converting Nascent Interest into Concrete Choice

Abbreviated Walk-Through of Sample Advising Day



Each meta-major advising day is designed with students' academic and career goals in mind. For example, a student interested in a health science career can learn about the various program offerings during the event. If he or she is weighing the trade-offs between a nursing assistant and phlebotomy career track, the student can consult with faculty in both specialties. Meanwhile, students who remain undecided can self-select a meta-major of interest and in an open-table format speak with faculty, who help parse out their decision and recommend a different discipline if necessary.

By incorporating knowledge from across the campus into their advising day, Yakima Valley ensures that students receive accurate, actionable information that directs them to select a program of study that fits their needs and interests.

See Tool 11 on pages 73–74 for a sample campus-wide advising day invitation email and advertisement.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Enticing Students with Economies of Advice

Four Benefits of Yakima Valley's Advising Day

Yakima Valley's campus-wide directed decision days allow students to access the collective career and academic advice of the entire campus. Students are grouped by their respective meta-majors, creating a personalized environment for a specific career community. Within these groups, in addition to interacting with advisors, faculty, and students in their field, they are also exposed to relevant career and internship opportunities.

Scaled Guidance

- Single focal point for advisors and faculty to help students make career-oriented decisions
- Related faculty close by to help

Logistical Efficiency

- Quarterly advising sessions reduce the frequency of one-on-one appointments
- Dedicated day, free of classes, gives part-time students chance to attend

Just-in-Time Advice

- Intentionally planned around registration deadline to focus conversations
- Provides enough lead time to make changes

Community Building

- Pathway-specific environment builds relationships with peers and faculty
- Enables students to ask questions and support academic decision-making

Event Raised YVC's Advising Participation Rate

The advising day itself follows the college's usual hours of operation and includes several alternative start times to help part-time, working, and commuting students attend the event.

Once they started holding the meta-major advising days, Yakima Valley found that nearly three times as many students received academic advising. Even those who did not attend received more individualized support from advisors, who had fewer students to follow up with after reaching a larger audience with the event.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Picking Major Early Not Always Beneficial

Uninformed Major Selection Weakens Completion Chances

Although program maps provide a clear sequence of courses once students select a path, they do not solve the root problems of initial program decision. Students often make career-related academic decisions based on inconsistent guidance from a variety of sources, including family members, peers, and faculty members. This problem is compounded by the fact that two-year degree programs do not offer as much time for exploration as four-year programs, leading many community college students to make quick and uninformed major choices.

Common Reasons for Changing Majors…

Undecided Student

Selects first major presented to him or her without refined understanding of interests or goals

"We have an unusually high number of accounting majors because it's listed first in the course catalog."

Nursing Student

Declares nursing based on scattered advice from family, friends, and limited career knowledge

"Rigor is one thing, but many of our nursing students switch because they discovered they do not like blood."

Curriculum Dean, Community College (Mountain West)

…Leads to Negative Outcomes

Delayed Completer

2.5 Average number of majors changed during community college

21 Average number of excess credits accumulated

5.6 Average elapsed years needed to obtain associate degree

In these and countless other similar situations, community college administrators are faced with students who change their minds partway through a program, and in turn, add time to their degree. As colleges face declines in available resources, they struggle to scale advising services to provide students quality and timely academic and career advice before the major selection point.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Discovering Best Fit on Their Own

Embedded Career Experiences Connect Student Interest with Majors

The first-year-experience course has recently gained prominence as a way to help orient students to college. Institutions can maximize the impact of these courses by supplementing traditional instruction on study habits and note-taking with early, consistent guidance that translates career goals into academic behaviors and helps students understand how to navigate college bureaucracy. Well-designed first-year pathway exploration courses give students extended exposure to programs and careers within each meta-major, increasing their understanding of how their skills and interests align with the associated long-term career and academic outcomes.

Designing an FYE Pathways Curriculum

1 *Career and Pathway Exploration*

- Personality and work-value assessment
- Guest lectures in related fields

2 *Connecting Pathway to Career*

- Guest lectures in related fields
- Internship application assistance

3 *Post-Community College Mapping*

- Transfer college research project
- Advisor-approved career plan

Not Just Your Typical College 101

Worth More Credits: Three credit hours provides more chances for project activities

Iterative Degree Planning: Advisors revisit academic plans using Microsoft SharePoint

Transfer School Comparison: Students research four-year options for career potential

Average FYE Course Impact

15% Percentage decrease in time to degree compared to non-FYE peers[1]

While many institutions already include a first-year-experience course in their program maps, administrators can improve the quality of existing courses by incorporating career assessments, introducing pathways exploration, and embedding internship and other experiential learning opportunities. Requiring students to enroll in the first-year-experience course during their first semester accelerates their exposure to accurate career and academic advice, which reduces excess credit accumulation and results in a 15% decrease in time to degree.

See Tool 12 on page 75 for a sample curriculum for a first-year Pathways exposure course.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

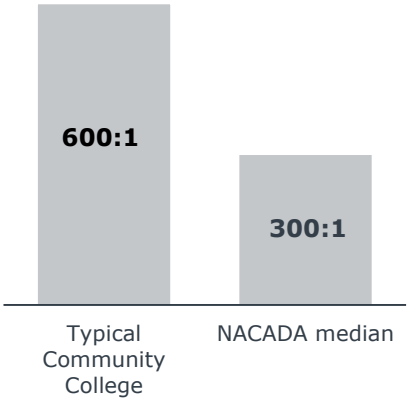
©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advising Ratios Far from Ideal

Adding Advising Personnel Often Prohibitively Expensive

Even after students complete a first-year-experience course and solidify their pathways choice, they will still need individual attention from advisors as they progress toward completion or transfer. Unfortunately, community colleges struggle with the well-known problem of low student-to-advisor ratios. Not only does the average advisor serve around 600 students, but his or her interactions with students are often too brief to provide substantive guidance.

Advisor Capacity at Community Colleges Is Stretched



Appointments Too Brief for Goal-Based Conversations

- 5 to 30 minutes during orientation
- <30 minutes during each semester

Improving Ratio an Expensive Proposition for All Community Colleges

Large Institution (~30,000 Students)

35+	$1.75M	1.3%
Needed Advisors	Cost per Year	Of total budget

Midsize Institution (~15,000 Students)

20+	$1M	4.2%
Needed Advisors	Cost per Year	Of total budget

Smaller Institution (~3,000 Students)

10+	$0.5M	6%
Needed Advisors	Cost per Year	Of total budget

Simply hiring additional staff may seem like a promising solution. Yet, as the analysis above shows, the cost of adding to the number of employed advisors in order to increase capacity for providing students support can add up quickly. Further, increasing the quantity of advisors does not necessarily improve the quality of student interactions, nor does a larger staff solve the problem of limited available time for student meetings.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

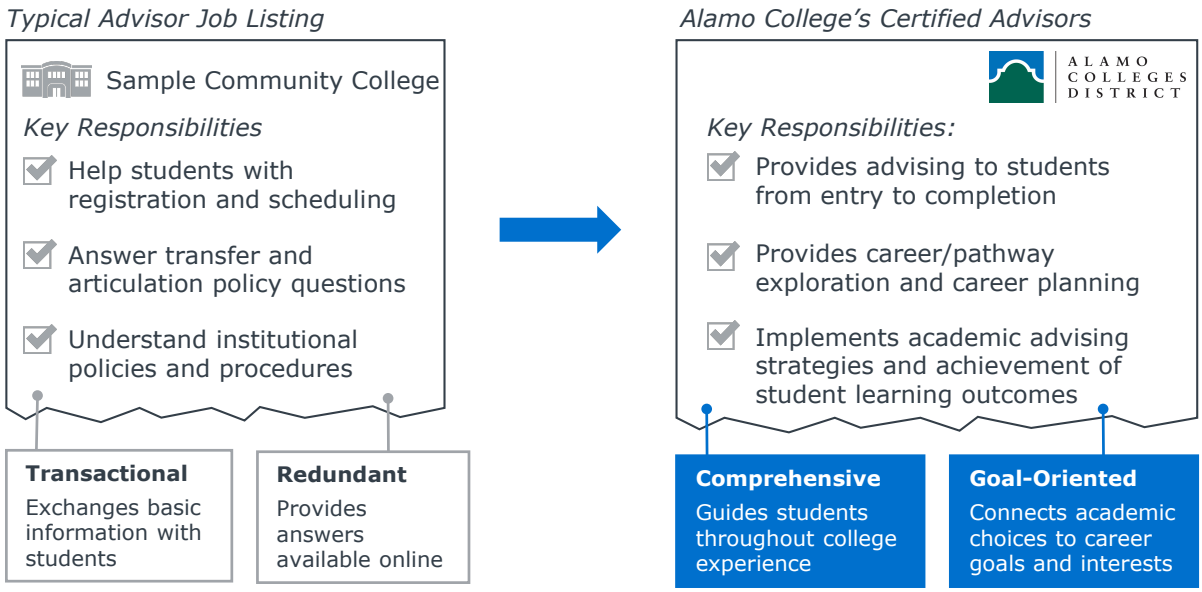
©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Responsibilities of Advising Changed

Advisor Job Descriptions Capture New Responsibilities

In 2013, **Alamo Colleges** enlisted the National Academic Advising Association to help implement a professional advising model across their campus, in order to provide students with more structured, comprehensive guidance. At the time, they struggled with inadequate student-to-advisor ratios and a largely fragmented advising system. Most important, however, their advisors were spending their limited amount of time on lower-order advising priorities instead of engaging students in substantive discussions about their academic and career goals.

Contrast in Top-Line Functions Reveals New Professional Role



In contrast with the typical responsibilities allocated to an advisor, many of which are transactional and even redundant in nature, Alamo's current advising model emphasizes the new priorities of a professional goal-setting advisor. It incorporates the key benefit of success coaches—personalized, intrusive advising practices—into the overarching goal of academic and career planning.

Alamo has also adopted a case management approach, which pairs an advisor with an individual student for his or her entire time on campus. This allows advisors to develop more personalized relationships with their students and gain a better understanding of their long-term goals.

See Tool 13 on page 76 for a sample job advertisement for a professional advisor.

Sources: Bruens R, "Academic Advisor: Job Requirements and Salary Info," Oct. 5, 2016, Alamo Colleges District, "Advisor-Student Success Job Description," accessed May 25, 2017, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Professionalization, Not Proliferation

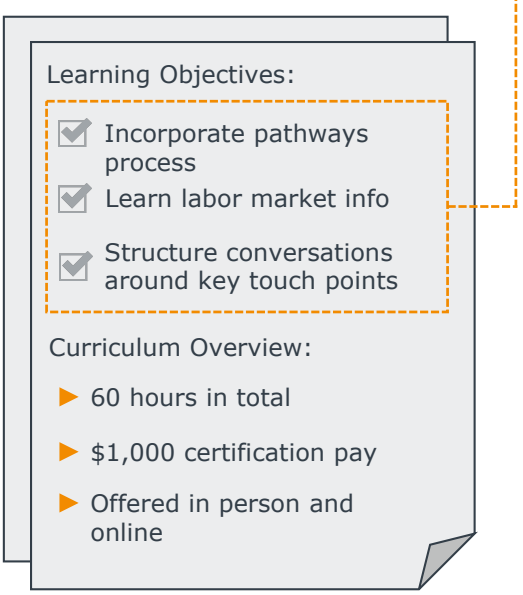
Alamo Colleges' Curriculum Reorients Advising Around Student Goals

The critical component of Alamo's advising model is a goal-based training that administrators developed with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning. All campus advisors are required to complete this three-tiered comprehensive training. The first tier provides essential institutional information and is made accessible to all faculty and staff. The second and third tiers focus on effective advising conversations and career mentoring, respectively, thus equipping advising offices to be a truly "one-stop shop" for students looking for guidance to achieve their long-term goals.

ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT

Codifies Goal-Based Outcomes

Simplified Advising Curriculum



Simultaneously Elevate Advising Function

Top of license: Ensures advisors operate at their highest possible capacity

Unified: Equips all advisors with same competencies, skills, and measurable objectives

Targeted: Encourages all advising staff to gain essential pathway knowledge

46% Increase in number of certified advisors

12% Decrease in credits at graduation

Those who complete the revamped advising curriculum receive a $1,000 bonus and are then considered "certified advisors," effectively unifying disparate advising functions across campus. Alamo has reported a 46% increase in the number of certified advisors since launching their new program, as well as a reduction in excess credits at graduation, suggesting that students also benefit from comprehensive and centralized advising services.

See Tools 14 and 15 on pages 77–80 for a professional advising training curriculum builder and scorecard.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

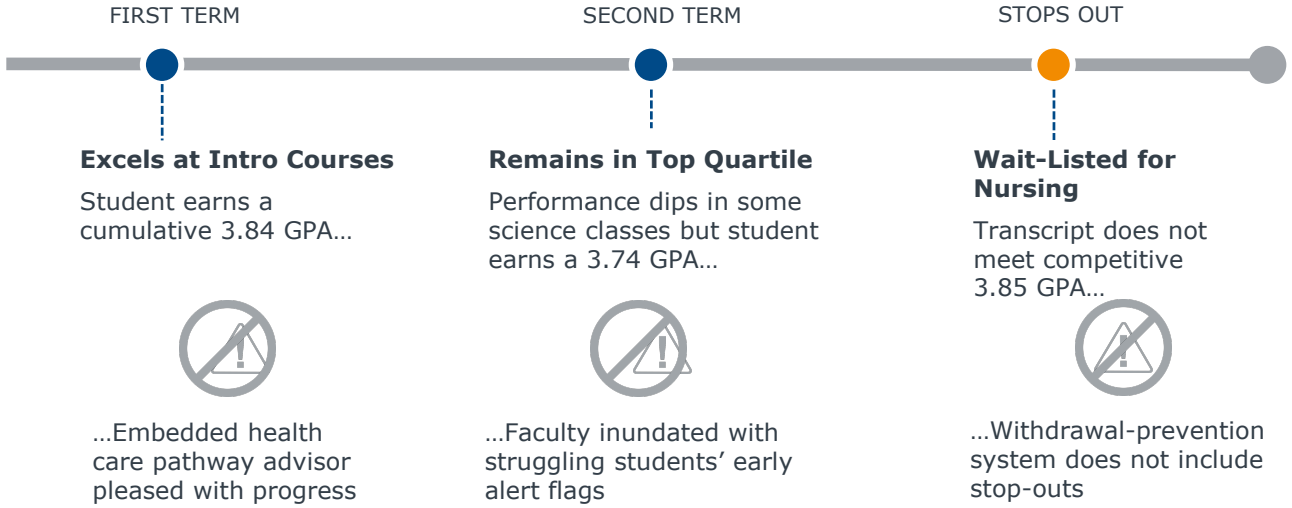
Letting Bright Ships Pass in the Night

Persistence Interventions Fail to Capture Discouraged Highfliers

One of the benefits of Pathways is that it helps students explore a variety of different related programs without credit loss. However, it does not explicitly address the needs of students who may want to change their pathway entirely. At present, many community colleges do not have an infrastructure in place to seamlessly facilitate this sort of change without significant credit accumulation and delays. This is especially evident in the case of high-performing students who may not meet the requirements to enter or remain in a particularly competitive program.

No Reason to Intervene Until It's Too Late

Prospective Nursing Student Stops Out Despite Guardrails



When these students—who may often fly under the radar of at-risk early alert systems—are turned away from pursuing a field of interest, they are faced with a serious dilemma of whether or not to remain at the institution. Often, colleges don't identify these students until after they've been rejected and risk intervening when it is too late to prevent students from stopping out.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Internally Recruit Students Looking to Leave

Suggest Related Program to Students Before They Stop Out

In order to prevent these high-achieving students from stopping out of the college altogether, **Volunteer State Community College** takes a proactive approach by identifying at-risk students in advance and offering them alternative opportunities that still fit their long-term goals. Partnering with a data analytics team, Vol State matches students with a new major that aligns with their career interests and minimizes the amount of excess credits needed for completion. Once a match has been found, advisors send students an "acceptance letter," congratulating them on their achievement and highlighting the opportunities presented by the new program.

Invite Students to New Program Before Stopping Out

- Categorize each major based on student movement
- Identify most common major transfer destinations of "donor majors"
- Send recruitment letter from sister program during month acceptance results released

5% Retention goal for recruitment letters

Letters Highlight New Program Acceptance

Program RE Letter (Structure)

- ☑ Congratulate student for "acceptance" into new program
- ☑ Explain why the student would be a good fit for the program
- ☑ Highlight different degree and certificate options
- ☑ Invite student to an open house to learn more about the new program
- ☑ Provide student with advisor contact information

The experience of being turned away from a dream program or career is a distressing one for students. Vol State advisors are sensitive to this and are careful to present the program switch as an accomplishment and a chance for students to embrace new opportunities. They are also proactive in following up with students who don't respond to their acceptance letter, in order to ensure that all students receive a face-to-face meeting in order to discuss their future prospects.

See Tool 16 on pages 81–82 for a sample "acceptance" letter for rerouted students and a list of common acceptor programs.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Flexing Pathways for Off-Pace Students

CHAPTER 4

- Tactic 14: Financial Aid-Supported Intersession Courses
- Tactic 15: Year-Round Default Mini-Mester

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Between Terms, a Missed Opportunity

Intersession Offerings Rarely Degree-Applicable or Affordable

Intersession terms—the time between regular semesters—have gained attention recently as a way of helping students take or retake a selection of degree-advancing courses. However, for many community colleges, these sessions have not been regarded as viable options for obtaining credit due to reputational and policy barriers. Intersessions are often viewed as periods for "enrichment" and thus don't offer critical degree-advancing courses. Further, as federal financial aid rules do not explicitly stipulate whether intersessions qualify for aid, colleges often do not advertise these as an option for students.

Focus on Enrichment, Not Advancement

Sample Community College Intersession Courses, Winter 2017

- **SCI 115** "The Science of Star Trek"
- **MUS 134** "Rock Music: Mirror of Change"
- **ARTS 112** "Lineage of Glass Art Making"
- **Econ 220** "Economics of Wine"

Overlooked for Practical Reasons

Absent from Aid Policies

Federal financial aid does not specify whether intersessions count toward full-time status

Students Unaware

Reputation for enrichment courses limits student interest and suggestions from faculty

Systems Not Configured

Financial aid and bursar processes do not allow students to apply aid

Missed Opportunity For Credit Obtainment

27% Percentage of full-time students completing 30 credits per year

5% Percentage of full-time students enrolled in an intersession[1]

These barriers further impede students' ability to reach the 30-credit threshold for timely degree completion. As a majority of students currently fail to meet this threshold, failing to maximize intersession periods represents a missed opportunity to help keep them on pace for on-time completion.

1) Based on EAB survey of colleges.

Sources: "New Rules: Policies to Strengthen and Scale the Game Changes," Complete College America, Nov. 2016, EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Coming in from the Cold

Adapt Policy and Billing Rules to Make Intersession a Path to Completion

The **University of Maine** reinvented their approach to intersessions in order to specifically help students who have fallen behind credit pace by offering additional sections of major requirement and bottleneck courses. Courses were taught in a condensed format and available entirely online, making them widely accessible to students. The university also decided to bill the intersession period as part of the spring term, which allows students to apply their spring financial aid to intersession courses. This also benefits part-time students who need to reach the minimum 12-credit, federal financial aid threshold.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

Back-End Changes Necessary for Enrollment

1 **Identify Intersession Courses**
- General education bottlenecks
- Sequenced courses
- Major requirements

2 **Provide Accessible Online Format**
- 100% online
- Three-week duration
- Five days per week

3 **Incent Faculty**
- Extra pay for course overload
- One-time $500 instructional design bonus

Making Financial Policy Student-Friendly

Billing Overlap
- Winter session billed as part of Spring term
- Allows students to apply Spring aid to Winter credits

Clear Aid Policy Online
- Financial aid and payment rules bolded and listed first
- Quick contact links to request more information

Impact Highlights

+4%
Increase in students taking 15 credits vs. last year

2,000
Total credit hours accumulated in first Winter session

+15%
Increase in A/B grades vs. Fall 2016

As a result of this restructuring, UMaine has seen a significant increase in the number of credits being earned during the Winter intersession. Student performance in critical, degree-advancing courses has also improved, suggesting that students benefit from the flexible format offered in the winter.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Helping Students Gain Ground in Critical Courses

Successful Adoption of 'WinterSession' at Middlesex Community College

Middlesex Community College is applying the same logic as the University of Maine by revising intersession offerings to aid student completion. By offering bottleneck and degree-advancing courses in a compressed format during the Winter term, students have the opportunity to make up or gain ground without adding time to degree.

More Chances for Essential Credit

Sample WinterSession Course Catalog

Major Requirements

- Basic Anatomy and Physiology 105
- Financial Accounting 220
- English Composition 101
- American Government 120

General Education Bottlenecks

- Intro to Biology 120
- College Chemistry 131
- Principles of Macroeconomics 140
- Principles of Microeconomics 150

56

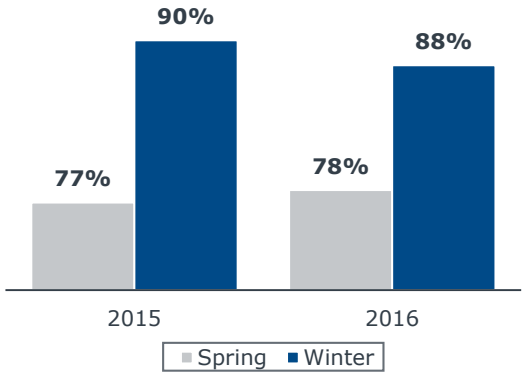
Total sections offered during 2017 WinterSession

1,560

Number of enrollments in first two years of WinterSession

Keeps Students on Track to Completion

Winter Course Completion Compared to Spring



63% Students who listed completion as primary goal for enrolling in WinterSession

Middlesex offered all of their WinterSession courses online, in order to make them maximally accessible to students who couldn't travel to campus over the holidays. As a result, the institution had over 1,500 enrollments in the first two years of launching WinterSession, and completion rates for WinterSession courses were significantly improved from those offered in the spring. These figures point to the fact that reformatting intersession courses has a substantial impact on students' motivation and success.

Striking to administrators, 61% of WinterSession students were 19 to 24 years old, illustrating the viability of this session for traditional-age students as well as for working adults. As most colleges already have an online intersession period in place, little to no staffing or infrastructure adjustments are necessary to implement this change. Instead, colleges can focus on ensuring that students can take major requirement and bottleneck courses in an easily accessible format, which will help propel them toward timely degree completion.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

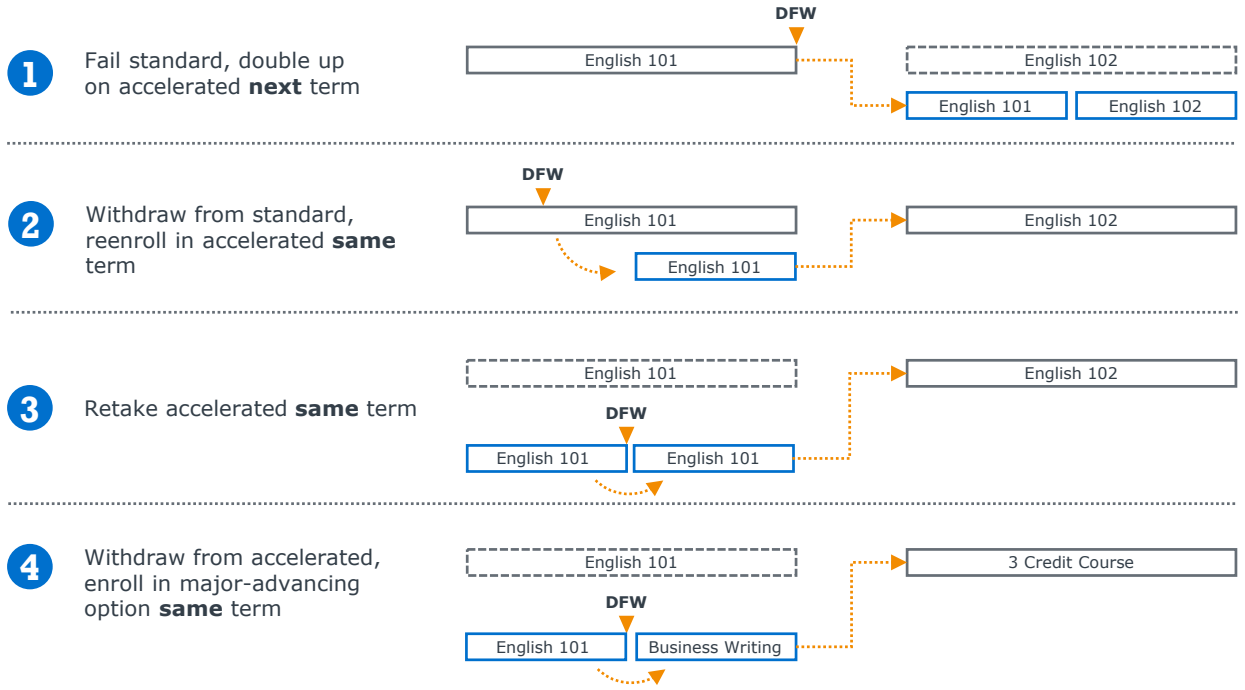
When Life 'Gets in the Way'

Avoiding 'Dead Time' in a Term from DFWs

Even when students exhibit exemplary academic behaviors, their progress can quickly become derailed because of personal issues that arise. The risk of falling off track is particularly high for nontraditional students, who face unique challenges and barriers to academic progress. Disruptions in transportation or employment, for instance, can prevent students from attending classes, leading to delays and premature stopping out.

Many progressive community colleges have begun to offer accelerated terms, allowing students who fall off track to retake a course in an expedited manner. This system provides students with the opportunity to catch up quickly, while avoiding downstream delays.

Accelerated Courses Offer Four Ways to Get Back on Pace



Accelerated course options are especially helpful when students' progress is disrupted by an unforeseeable life event. Instead of forcing students to veer significantly off course, accelerated course offerings act as guardrails, providing students with flexibility and guidance to steer them back onto their original course.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Transforming the Academic Calendar

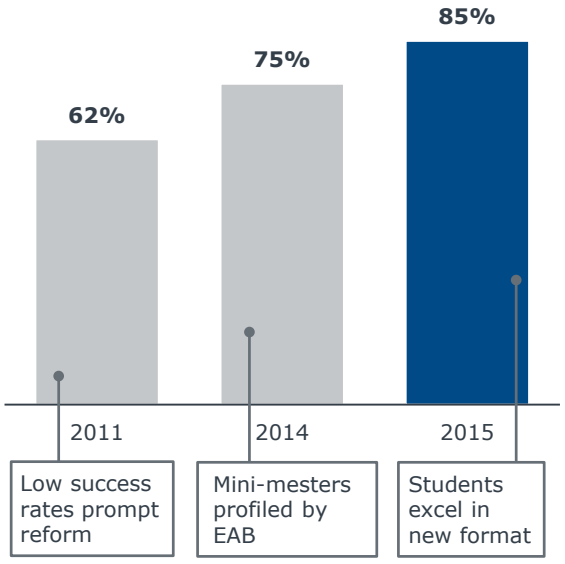
Trident Tech's Mini-Mesters Continue to Raise Course Success Rates

Mini-semesters have received attention in the four-year space as another means to promote persistence, especially for those students who stop out midway through the term. A mini-semester gives these students a second opportunity to retake a course in an accelerated fashion, which is linked with improved completion rates. **Trident Technical College** implemented their mini-mesters in 2011, in order to combat low course pass rates. Since then, course pass rates have improved by more than 20%, an increase that administrators attribute to the new mini-mester format.

TRIDENT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Best Practice's Sustained Results

Average Course Pass Rates at Trident Tech



Lessons Learned from Trident Technical College

1. **Campus Advertisement of Changes**

   Communicate schedule to new and returning students. Trident recommends in-class, online, and paper announcements

2. **Faculty Professional Development**

   Faculty can apply for small funding to pursue professional development on compressed scheduling curriculum

3. **Financial Aid Disbursement**

   Financial aid office staff member manages disbursement and tracks students meeting criteria for Title IV funds

A shift from a traditional semester system to an accelerated mini-mester system is a significant undertaking, and the administration at Trident Tech learned valuable lessons during their transition. Specifically, they cited consistent communication with students, support for applicable faculty development, and centralized financial aid disbursement as key features of a successful implementation.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

From Second Chance to First Choice

Amarillo College Sets Mini-Mesters as Default for Fall, Spring, and Summer

Amarillo College transformed the mini-semester idea from a second-chance "guardrail" to a default college schedule. Instead of two optional mini-semesters, Amarillo made eight-week mini-mesters the default for all students and added two additional sessions in the summer, effectively creating a viable year-round calendar.

Initial Accelerated Success Prompts Mini-Mester Expansion

30%

Increase in course completion rates compared to 16-week term

97%

Completion rate for students taking at least 24 credits per year

$10M

Projected revenue if overall college retention rate raises to match current mini-mester's

Reaching Full-Time in No More Than Two Courses per Term

Sample Year-Round Schedule

Fall 1	Fall 2
Aug. 28-Oct. 23	Oct. 30-Dec. 22
• 6 credits	• 6 credits
Spring 1	Spring 2
Jan. 1-Feb. 26	Mar. 5-Apr. 30
• 6 credits	• 6 credits
Summer 1	Summer 2
May 7-Jun. 29	Jul. 9-Aug. 27
• 3 credits	• 3 credits

30 Number of total credits accumulated in calendar year

Because this format expands the overall teaching calendar for faculty, colleges must also raise their base pay for "nontraditional" courses, such as those taught over the summer. Amarillo increased summer faculty course pay from 75% to 100% of normal compensation to incentivize larger course loads.

The shift to a year-round mini-mester schedule has proved to be beneficial for students and the college. Course completion rates have risen 30%, and Amarillo is projecting that the new system will bring in $10M in additional revenue.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

The New Community College Norm?

Year-Round Default Mini-Mesters Require Considerable Structural Change

The major calendar adjustment of year-round mini-mesters comes with a multitude of implementation challenges. Institutions must anticipate these challenges and take steps to overcome roadblocks to change when implementing mini-mesters on campus. For example, year-round faculty teaching schedules associated with mini-mesters mandate a net increase in each faculty's teaching load. In effect, it increases the traditional 32-week teaching calendar to 48 weeks. Disruptions to the college's day-to-day operations notwithstanding, compensation for this increased load is a major hurdle for colleges to contend with.

Four Factors Facilitating Adoption

Amarillo College

Larger Course Load
Faculty given 10% raise to incentivize and increase base course load from 15 to 18 credits

More Faculty
Amarillo College plans to hire five more full-time faculty in the fall to increase teaching capacity

Course Parity
Summer course pay increased from 75% to 100% and lab sections from 50% to 100%

Data Discussions
Dean shares potential impact of the calendar change at department meetings

> "We're big proponents of the eight-week schedule because the data at most colleges will show 'A students' disappearing around 12 weeks because of a life event. I caution colleges about the 16-week semester because it gives too many chances for life getting in the way."
>
> *Vice President of Academic Affairs, Community College, Texas*

Amarillo addresses this potential problem by providing faculty with a 10% raise and increasing summer and lab course pay to 100%. They also plan to hire additional full-time faculty in order to expand their teaching capacity. While these are substantial investments, the administration at Amarillo expects them to be easily offset by the increase in revenue projected by current retention rates. By implementing year-round mini-mesters, the college has made significant strides in retention and completion, suggesting that the shift to a year-round calendar ultimately justifies the institution's investment in student success.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Implementation Toolkit

- Tool 1: Program-Mapping Process Guide
- Tool 2: Program-Mapping Change Management Chart
- Tool 3: Speed-Sequencing Checklist
- Tool 4: Online Mapping Tool Builder
- Tool 5: Community Interview Guide
- Tool 6: Course-Overlap Identification Primer
- Tool 7: Program-Mapping Template
- Tool 8: Pathways Jargon-Reduction Audit
- Tool 9: Student Focus Group Guide
- Tool 10: Cost Comparison Calculator
- Tool 11: Advising Day Communication Materials
- Tool 12: First-Year Exposure Course Sample Curriculum
- Tool 13: Professional Advisor Job Listing
- Tool 14: Advisor Training Curriculum Builder
- Tool 15: Advising Goal-Setting Metrics Scorecard
- Tool 16: Related Program Acceptance Letter & Examples

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Program-Mapping Process Guide

Purpose of the Tool

When designing and implementing student-centric pathways, it is important to consider all relevant requirements and related credits as well as the overall student experience. Consult the following guide to ensure that your mapping process proceeds in the most efficient order and includes all of the necessary requirements.

Process Overview

Identify Program Requirements → **Determine Non-Major Requirements** → **Assemble Program Maps** → **Implement Maps**

Process Step by Step

Step 1: Identify Program Requirements

Prioritize...

1. State, accreditor mandates
2. Transfer institution requirements
3. Requests from employer, industry advisory council
4. Existing graduation or completion protocols

Step 2: Determine Non-Major Requirements

Ensure that general education credits...

- Serve as prerequisites for program requirements
- Overlap with other programs within a meta-major
- Provide foundational content knowledge

Step 3: Assemble Program Maps

Establish...

- Participation from various departments and divisions
- Commitment to simplifying the student experience
- A concrete deadline for map completion

Step 4: Implement Maps

Remember to...

- Develop consistent messaging
- Create opportunities for feedback
- Reassess periodically

Source: EAB interviews and analysis..

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Program-Mapping Change Management Chart

Purpose of the Tool

As Guided Pathways reform necessarily requires a substantial shift in the way that programs are developed and implemented, generating faculty and staff engagement can be a hurdle colleges struggle to clear. The following guide presents strategies to alleviate uncertainty and opposition from faculty by emphasizing the central role of the student perspective—as well as later outcomes—in Pathways reform.

	Stage	Description	Point Person(s)
Setting the Stage	1. Create Urgency	*Identify institutional gaps in efforts to meet student needs*	VP of Academic Affairs
	2. Establish a Campus-Wide Vision	*Reaffirm the community college commitment to provide educational access and opportunities for all students*	Strategic Planning Committee
	3. Assemble the Right Team	*Solicit participation in program mapping, strategic planning committees from across campus*	Deans
Promoting Engagement	4. Communicate for Buy-In	*Establish open communication lines between the faculty and administration regarding Pathways reform*	VP of Academic Affairs
	5. Empower for Action	*Engage faculty expertise and content knowledge when making program decisions*	Deans
	6. Create Short-Term Wins	*Offer departmental incentives for successful implementation initiatives*	Program Heads
Sustaining Success	7. Don't Let Up	*Revisit the original mission and ensure that administrative commitment is consistent*	VP of Academic Affairs, Deans
	8. Make Change Sustainable	*At the end of each year, evaluate progress and ensure that successful initiatives are made permanent and communicated to the campus community*	Cabinet

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Speed-Sequencing Checklist

Purpose of the Tool

Community colleges often struggle to identify the right courses to include in their program maps because content and scheduling knowledge is dispersed within campus silos. **St. Petersburg College** solves this problem by bringing together faculty, advisors, and administrative staff in two-hour "speed sequencing" sessions. During these sessions, committees physically map out potential program maps on sticky notes. Use the checklist below to implement a similarly streamlined program-mapping process on your campus.

1 Preparation

Minimize committee inefficiency via advance preparation and communication of mapping goals.

- ❑ Compile all of the course titles listed within a program, and write each on a sticky note
- ❑ Send invitations to program faculty, advisors, and curriculum support staff to participate in mapping committee meeting
- ❑ Communicate in advance a firm time limit and expectations for the mapping meeting

2 Implementation

Create an agenda that allows for collaboration across departmental silos, while maintaining a structure based on effective design principles.

- ❑ Identify which courses are externally mandated, prerequisites, or core courses
- ❑ Determine whether any courses listed may have hidden prerequisites that need additional sticky notes
- ❑ Discuss the optimal general education requirements for the specific program of study
- ❑ Categorize courses based on controllability (based on program requirements hierarchy on page 17)
- ❑ Beginning with the requirements that you have the least control over (i.e., those mandated by external bodies) and proceeding to those you have the most control over (i.e., existing institutional requirements), lay out the course sequence that promotes the quickest route to completion
- ❑ Promote discussion between faculty members and advisors to identify and revise course combinations that may be toxic for students
- ❑ Reevaluate the completed map to ensure that it meets all necessary program and institutional requirements

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Online Mapping Tool Builder

Purpose of the Tool

Faculty input is a critical component of assembling program maps, however, managing and organizing this input can pose additional challenges. Linn-Benton Community College utilizes an online mapping tool not only to allow faculty from across the campus to contribute to the construction of individual program maps but also to streamline the collection of this data. Scheduling staff then determine ideal course sequences based on the submissions. Share the following seven key components of an online submission portal with the member of your institutional research department who is tasked with building and disseminating the online mapping tool to all faculty.

Process Steps for Building an Online Mapping Tool

Essential Components	Action Steps	Examples
1. Digital Platform Usage	Identify a reliable and easy-to-navigate digital collaboration platform before creating the online tool	Laserfiche, Google Forms
2. Course Identification	Create fields to identify the course(s) in question, provide a drop-down menu of all course options for easy input	"Subject," "Course Number," "Title"
3. Credit Allocation	Utilize a text box for specifying the number of credits allocated to the course	
4. Role Within Program Map	Require faculty to indicate the role of the course within the program map	"General Education," "Program Requirement," "Elective"
5. Specificity	Include options for identifying the nature of the course	"Required" or "Recommended"
6. Sequence Start Selection	List term options for faculty to select when a course will take place	"Summer," "Fall," "Winter," "Spring"
7. Other Comments	Provide a text box for faculty to name additional course recommendations or to add comments related to the process	

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Community Interview Guide

Purpose of the Tool

Meta-majors provide colleges the opportunity to engage with their community stakeholders, as they work to tailor academic offerings to workforce needs. However, it can be difficult to meet the myriad demands of community stakeholders given faculty preference, campus history, and accreditation standards. Opportunities for faculty and employer weigh-in are essential when determining clear and agreed-upon standards, which serve to ease widespread Pathways adoption. Use this tool to identify community and campus stakeholders, then, refer to the interview guide to elicit feedback and greater community engagement.

Identifying Stakeholders in Pathways-Related Community Engagement

Location	Stakeholders
On Campus	Current Students Faculty Administrators Past Review Participants
Local Community	Employer Partners Alumni Advisory Board Members Local Government Leaders School Board Leaders District Level Career & Technical Ed. Directors Retired Faculty

General Principles for Gathering Community Input

- Limit number of interview questions to six, and cap conversations at 60 minutes for concise and actionable answers
- Conduct community interviews on an annual basis, engage past participants after the first year
- Following the first year, compare responses to past outreach to ensure progress
- Engage faculty to win buy-in and help them understand the employability skills connected to their courses
- Ask employers and external stakeholders about skills, attitudes, and competencies to ensure the credibility and industry relevance of all meta-majors
- Aim to develop a more vested interest on the part of employers

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Community Interview Guide (cont.)

Stakeholder Interview Guide

Stakeholder	Interview Questions
Internal Groups	1. What essential academic knowledge do associate degree graduates need in order to be successful employees and well-rounded citizens? 2. What essential academic knowledge do associate degree graduates need in order to be successful transfer students? 3. In what ways do your courses support and challenge students to become more successful employees in the future? 4. Are you familiar with other courses offered on campus that seem to relate to the learning outcomes of your own courses? 5. Which skills do students develop in the context of your courses? How do these skills relate to the workforce? 6. If your career background involves an industry other than education, what competencies did you learn working in that industry that you had not developed while in school?
External Groups	1. What essential skills do associate degree graduates need in order to be successful employees and well-rounded citizens? 2. What qualities have you found to be essential in employees? Which attitudes distinguish an outstanding employee from a satisfactory one? 3. What are the specific goals and outcomes you have set for your employees? 4. Where have you noticed deficient performance within your company or organization? (With what tasks do your entry-level employees tend to struggle?) 5. Are any new processes, workflows, or employee expectations being put in place within your company or organization? 6. Are there existing best practices or company processes that we should embed within our standards and curricula?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Course-Overlap Identification Primer

Purpose of the Tool

Colleges often struggle to build meta-majors that encourage timely completion while also allowing for exploration. **Jackson College** uses enrollment information—at the course and program level—to identify the most common courses across programs within a meta-major. Using this information, they are able to build common course schedules across programs, which encourages students to explore within a meta-major without accumulating excess credits. Consult this guide to outline the steps needed to identify these overlapping course sequences.

Identification

1. Identify a meta-major
2. Organize each program of study within a meta-major (e.g., associate degrees, certificates)
3. Determine the number of students within each program
4. Calculate the total number of students within the meta-major
5. Determine the percentage of meta-major students within each program

Pathway (N = Fall 2014)	Degrees	Current # Students	Percentage of Pathway
Business & Computer Technology Total Students = 1000	AAS-Accounting	100	10%
	AAS-Accounting/Finance	100	10%
	AAS-Administrative Assistant	75	7.5%
	AAS-Business Administration	400	40%
	AAS-Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management	100	10%
	AAS-Entrepreneurship	100	10%
	AAS-Executive Assistant	50	5%
	Certificate-Accounting	25	2.5%
	Certificate-Business Administration	25	2.5%
	Certificate-Culinary Arts	25	2.5%

Organization

6. In an Excel document, separate each unique class within a meta-major in its own row
7. List each program of study within a meta-major in its own column, along with its percentage of meta-major students (from step 5)
8. For each individual class, mark the corresponding cell in which it is a requirement for that program of study
9. Add the percentages of meta-major students for each class to calculate the total percentage of the entire meta-major population for which the individual class is required

Liberal Arts				
		41.80%	21.40%	7.80%
	Class	arts.aa	grde.aas	muwd.aas
49.60%	ENG 10	G		G
29.20%	MAT 139		G	G
63.20%	ADO 4	G	G	
41.80%	PSY 140	G		

Next Steps: Mapping Programs of Study

- Following the course-overlap identification process, begin mapping by building as many common semesters as possible across programs of study
- Then, branch out common programs based on class requirements

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Program-Mapping Template

Purpose of the Tool

Guided Pathways are often presented to students in the form of inconsistent or administrative language. **Middlesex Community College** uses a simplified jargon-free Pathways map to help students clearly identify the sequence of essential courses needed to complete their program of study. Modify the program-map template below to create your own student-facing program map. Refer to the callout boxes for essential components of a clear and consistent program map. Then, use the "Pathways Jargon-Reduction Audit" (Tool 7) to ensure clarity in your language.

Start Here

Indicate a clear starting point

Semester 1	Credits	Graduation Requirement	Completed
Example: ENG 101—Composition 1	3	Yes	❑
Example: First-Year-Experience Course	1	Yes	❑
Example: Writing Elective—Recommended: ENG 104—Intro to Digital Writing	2	No	❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
Total Credits:			

List course names in simple, jargon-free terms

Specify essential degree-advancing courses

Semester 2	Credits	Graduation Requirement	Completed
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
Total Credits:			

Provide checklist to encourage students to track their own progress

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Program-Mapping Template (cont.)

Program-Map Template, Semesters 3 and 4

Major Declaration Occurs Here

Call out critical student decision points

Semester 3	Credits	Graduation Requirement	Completed
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
Total Credits:			

Semester 4	Credits	Graduation Requirement	Completed
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
			❑
Total Credits:			

Format using colors consistent with college branding

Indicate a clear end point

Congratulations! You've finished!

Other Essential Components

- Indicate any educational on-ramps along the way
- Highlight opportunities for stackable elements, such as industry certifications and credentials

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Pathways Jargon-Reduction Audit

Purpose of the Tool

The following exercise may be used with staff members to conduct a jargon-reduction audit so that students and other audiences may more effectively navigate all Pathways-related communication conveyed via the college website, newsletters, handouts, and other written materials.

Instructions

- *Identify the top 10 Pathways-related webpages (i.e., those with the highest volume of traffic)*
- *Brainstorm all other student- and parent-facing material that generates a high volume of in-person traffic*
- *Provide staff with print copies of webpages identified and additional self-identified materials*
- *Ask staff to complete the following tasks*

1. **Reduce Multisyllabic Words:** Underline all words with more than two syllables. Identify and replace them with shorter words (even if this requires using multiple words in the place of one multisyllabic word)

2. **Remove Passive Voice:** Ask staff to highlight all language in passive voice, rephrase sentences to be in active voice

3. **Group-Related Information:** Condense all text that pertains to the same topic in a specific area and use white space to separate it from information pertaining to another topic

4. **Translate Jargon:** Replace jargon (where appropriate) with translations for a non-higher education audience

Example:

✖ Original Text:

Choose a Meta-Major

After you have been admitted to the college, you must select a **meta-major**. **Meta-majors** *are* **career clusters** *used by* all community colleges in the state. In order to be **eligible** to participate in a particular **program of study** and/or enroll in **credit classes**, students must select one of the college's eight **meta-majors**. Once you have designated a program of study, you *will be assigned* an advisor based upon your selection.

Gunning Fog Index Score: 12.73

Key:
Passive Voice
Jargon
Multisyllabic

✔ Revised Text:

Choose a Meta-Major

If you are an admitted student, you must select a field of study, called a "meta-major." This is a group of majors that fits with your career goals. It's important to select a meta-major because this allows you to enroll in classes that count toward your degree, which could impact how fast you complete your degree.

After the first two terms, you will then select a single major, or program of study, within your broader group of majors. Based on your choice, the college will assign you a success coach to advise you.

Gunning Fog Index Score: 8.80

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Student Focus Group Guide

Purpose of the Tool

Course scheduling is an already complicated process that only grows in complexity with the implementation of Guided Pathways. Student perspective is a critical but sometimes overlooked aspect of making successful scheduling changes. While administrators and faculty often rely on preconceived notions of student needs and goals, this does not always align with the student experience. Colleges can use focus groups to move past the limits of traditional course feedback forms and receive real-time student data and feedback to determine students' scheduling preferences and to eliminate course bottlenecks. Use this checklist to convene successful student focus groups on your campus. Then utilize the sample discussion questions to facilitate conversation during the focus group sessions.

1 Student Participants

Ensure that groups represent a diverse sample of students in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, and enrollment status as well as a wide array of student perspectives and experiences.

- ❑ Include students who are traditional, part-time, developmental ed., and continuing education
- ❑ Communicate opportunity for students to participate across multiple modes and venues on campus
- ❑ Include students studying a variety of majors across all available pathways

Keep in mind the optimal focus group size is 5–10 students

2 Student Staffing Models

Utilize a peer staffing model to promote student leadership and foster greater buy-in from participants.

- ❑ Identify student leaders on campus who have demonstrated effective organizational and communication skills
- ❑ Solicit help from current work-study students to serve as group leaders
- ❑ Consult student advisors for recommendations of potential student leaders

If enlisting a faculty moderator, identify specific staff members (e.g., student services staff) that are particularly adept at engaging with students, limit ratio of focus group moderators to one staff member for every 6 students

3 Location and Duration

Identify a convenient campus location and adopt a time frame that will be most conducive to generating student participation and eliciting quality feedback.

- ❑ Ensure a sense of privacy by conducting focus groups in private rooms with seats arranged in a circle
- ❑ Plan for a 60-minute session to allow time for discussion

Prevent interruptions by posting signs indicating focus group in progress

4 Incentive Systems

Consider offering incentives, such as bookstore vouchers, priority registration, or other academic-related incentives to motivate students to participate in focus group research. Students are more inclined to participate in the focus group if there are direct benefits to them.

- ❑ Offer a free piece of college-branded merchandise (e.g., T-shirt or tumbler) to students who commit to participate in a focus group
- ❑ Award those individuals who attend and contribute quality feedback with attendance and participation prizes

Offer focus group opportunity for more students than optimal focus group size to acknowledge that not all students will respond

5 Data Retrieval

Systematically collect student data produced by each focus group session.

- ❑ Ensure that focus groups adhere to all Institutional Research Board (IRB) protocol regarding confidentiality, consent, etc.
- ❑ If possible, include additional space on consent forms for participants to consent to being recorded

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Student Focus Group Guide (cont.)

Use the following bank of sample discussion questions to facilitate conversation, elicit student feedback, and inform best course scheduling practices.

Sample Focus Group Discussion Questions

1 Distilling Attendance Barriers

- Which courses do you find most difficult to attend and to attend on time? Which do you find easiest?
    - Do you attribute this to the time of the day when the class meets?
    - The days of the week the classes meet?
    - The campus location in which the classes are held?
- In an ideal situation, where and when would the majority of your classes take place?

2 Managing Competing Demands

- What external barriers do you find most challenging to overcome to attend class? Why?
    - Has difficulty with transportation ever prevented you from attending or enrolling in a course?
    - Have conflicts with work schedules ever prevented you from attending or enrolling in a course?
- How far in advance would you like course listings and schedules to be available?

3 Identifying Modality Preferences

- Have you taken any online classes?
    - If yes, was your attendance rate better than for in-person courses?
    - Did your performance (course grade) differ for the online course?
    - Would you like to have more courses offered online?
- Would you prefer a block schedule for certain classes? If so, which ones and why?

4 Uncovering Registration Bottlenecks

- Have you ever been denied enrollment in a requisite course because it had met capacity? If yes, what course did you take in its place, and why?
- How would you recommend that we ease the registration process?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Cost Comparison Calculator

Purpose of the Tool

When implementing Pathways reforms, changes in course preferences and subsequent enrollment can cause misalignment between faculty supply and class demand. Faculty who are not teaching full course loads can cost the college on average $14,000 per course[1], in addition to the costs of recruiting and hiring adjunct professors. Alternatively, colleges can assess current faculty credentials, identify related disciplines within their general expertise, and evaluate the costs of retraining these professors so that they can teach alternative courses of higher demand. Use the step-by-step instructions to identify all relevant costs associated with each option. Then, manipulate the cost comparison calculator below to assess your own college's budgetary allowances and determine the best course of action for your institution when addressing the Pathways-generated faculty supply and course demand challenge.

SINCLAIR COLLEGE

Retraining a Current Full-Time Professor	Hiring a New Adjunct Professor
1. Survey under-enrolled departments to pinpoint which professors are the best candidates to participate in retraining	1. Survey most in-demand courses to identify the number of additional adjuncts needed to teach the courses
2. Enumerate how many additional credits faculty members will need in order to teach the new higher-demand courses	2. Isolate the standard salary of an adjunct professor per course[2]
3. Identify the cost of graduate-level credits at a local university	3. Total the number of courses in need of adjunct professors in order to accommodate increased student demand
4. Calculate the cost of retraining a professor by multiplying the number of additional credits needed by the cost of each credit	4. Calculate the salary of each adjunct by multiplying the salary per course by the number of courses taught. Add the cost of a faculty search to find the total hiring costs [3]
5. Find the total cost of faculty retraining by multiplying the cost per professor by the number of professors in need of additional credits	5. Assess the total institutional costs by multiplying the total hiring costs per adjunct by the number of additional adjuncts needed

Editable Cost Comparison Calculators

Costs of Retraining Current Full-Time Professors	
# of Additional Training Credits Needed per Faculty Member	6
Cost per Credit	$450.00
Total Cost of Retraining per Professor	$2,700.00
# of Professors in Need of Retraining	5
Total Institutional Costs of Faculty Retraining	$13,500.00
Costs of Hiring Additional Adjunct Professors	
Adjunct Salary per Course	$2,700.00
# of Courses Taught per Adjunct	4
Total Salary Costs per Adjunct	$10,800.00
Costs of Faculty Search and Recruitment per Adjunct	$1,000.00
Total Hiring Costs per Adjunct	$11,800.00
# of Additional Adjuncts Needed	5
Total Insitutional Costs of Hiring New Adjunct Professors	$59,000.00

1) Assumes $72,000 median salary and 15-credit course load.
2) Consult this source for the median adjunct salary per course www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/05/the-cost-of-an-adjunct/394091.
3) Consult this source for the average cost of faculty search www.uiargonaut.com/2015/02/09/faculty-hiring-expenses.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advising Day Communication Materials

Sample Email Template

Purpose of the Tool

Students often choose programs of study based on limited or segmented advice. **Yakima Valley Community College** combines both advisor and faculty advice into a full-day advising event. When planning your own campus-wide advising day, it is essential to adequately inform all students of the opportunity through multiple communication channels and at various times. Begin by reaching out directly to students via a targeted email campaign. Send the following sample email to all students two weeks in advance. Then, follow up with a reminder email within the week of the event.

Advising Day Invitation Email

From: Academic Administrator
To: Students
Subject: Campus-Wide Advising Day, Thursday, October 26th

This quarter's campus-wide advising day will be held on **Thursday, October 26th**. All students are invited and highly encouraged to attend.

Campus-wide advising occurs once each quarter to provide you a chance to review your academic plan and ensure you are moving efficiently along the path to your education goals. This is a full-day event in which advisors suspend their daytime classes so you have more time to meet with them.

Advising sessions are organized by meta-majors and occur at multiple times throughout the day (7:30 am–9:00 am, 10:00 am–11:30 am, 12:30 pm–2:00 pm, 3:00 pm–4:30 pm, 5:30 pm–7:00 pm). Plan to attend one 90-minute session. Please see the available location options below:

• Arts & Humanities	Languages Building, Room 115
• Social Sciences & Education	Williams Higher Education Center, Room 220
• STEM	Smith Family Hall, Room 200
• Business	South Campus Technology Complex, Building 18
• Healthcare	Ryan Library, 3rd Floor Tutoring Center

We look forward to seeing you on **Thursday, October 26th**. If you have any questions, please click here for some FAQs and answers. We also encourage you to speak with a faculty member to learn more about the campus-wide advising day.

John Doe
Director of Student Services
EAB Community College
1234 Street Address
City, ST 12345
Office: (123) 456-7890
emailaddress@college.edu

1 Begin by clearly stating the date and encouraging every student to participate

2 Explain what campus-wide advising entails and why it's important

3 Utilize multiple start times to accommodate all students' schedules

4 List all meta-major opportunities and corresponding locations to eliminate confusion and allow students to plan accordingly

Advising Day Reminder Email

Don't forget that campus-wide advising day is this **Thursday, October 26th, from 7:30 am to 7:00 pm.** Find a session that works with your schedule to learn about our pathways and discover which one fits your passions. Advisors are eager to discuss future goals and current course selection with you.

Please click here to learn more.

Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity!

5 Provide a direct link to the campus-wide advising day advertisement on the website so students can revisit times and locations as well as learn answers to FAQs

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advising Day Communication Materials (cont.)

Sample Advertisement Template

Advising Day Student-Facing Advertisement

Generating student interest in the campus-wide advising day is a critical step to the preparation phase. However, many students become disinterested and will choose not to attend an event if they are uncertain about how it relates to them. The following adapted sample advertisement includes Yakima Valley Community College's answers to some frequently asked questions to help students understand the importance of taking advantage of this advising opportunity. Modify the sample advertisement below to be printed and hung in student spaces across campus, then digitize and post it on the college website as well.

Join Us for Campus-Wide Advising Day

Thursday, October 26th

This quarter's campus-wide advising day will be held on **Thursday, October 26th between 7:30 am and 7:00 pm**. Don't miss out on this opportunity to meet with an advisor and review your academic plan. We're here to help you choose a career pathway that excites you! And we want to guide you as you progress along this path to your education goals.

Why should I choose a pathway?

Students who have a clear plan are more likely to achieve their academic goals. Pathway advising helps you make an academic plan and focus your time at YVC. A good plan can save you time and money.

What is pathway advising?

Pathway advising helps you connect your interests to related degrees and certificates. When you choose a pathway, you choose a group of advisors who are experts on those degrees and certificates.

What does an advisor do?

Advisors are full-time instructors and counselors who will help you understand degree and certificate requirements, develop a balanced schedule, and prepare you for registration. Meeting with an advisor can help keep you on track for graduation.

Am I stuck on a pathway forever?

No. We understand goals can shift and bend as life happens. So if your goals change, your advisor will help you to change pathways.

Consult the student support services website at website.com for more information about locations and starting times. We look forward to seeing you there!

1 Use conversational language to attract students' interest and encourage their attendance

2 Personalize the event by reminding students of their long-term goals

3 Anticipate student questions about the pathways concept and how advising will help them along their way to graduation

4 Be sure to include a source for students to find additional information, particularly locations and times

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

First-Year Exposure Course Sample Curriculum

Purpose of the Tool

The first-year-experience course continues to grow in prominence as administrators aim to orient students to college. Institutions can maximize the impact of these courses by supplementing traditional instruction on study habits and note-taking with early, consistent guidance that translates career goals into academic behaviors. By doing so, colleges can better prepare students to navigate college bureaucracy. This tool provides a sample of what a comprehensive first-year exposure course might include.

Week(s)	Topic	In-Class Activities	Assignments
1	Introduction	• Overview of course goals, activities, and expectations • Student introductions and community building	• Personality and soft-skills assessments • Pre-course survey • Initial academic and career interest brainstorm
2	Navigating College Bureaucracy	• Summary of college departments, their roles, and how to contact them • Website, enrollment, and SIS orientation	• Explore available student support resources
3–8	Meta-Major Overviews	• Description of required courses and related academic and career outcomes • Program representatives share insight and answer questions	• Rate interest in and compile questions about presented meta-majors
9	Self-Awareness and Management	• Review of time management, emotional coping, and study skills • Group discussion of first impressions of college	**Checkpoint: Ranking or Selection of Meta-Major(s) of Interest**
10	Meta-Major Exploration	• Library tour and orientation • In-depth research and investigation of meta-major requirements and outcomes • Research transfer and/or career opportunities associated with meta-major of interest	• Revisit academic and career interest brainstorm • Select meta-major for final project • Connect with faculty, student, or community member involved in academic interest area
11	Content Learning	• Overview of reading, note-taking, and test preparation skills and tools • Connecting course content to long-term goals	**Checkpoint: Schedule an Academic Advising Appointment**
12	Career Center Orientation	• Introduction to career center staff and services	• Work-value assessment
13	Progress Monitoring	• Reflection on individual growth since beginning of course • Tools for evaluating academic and career progress	**Checkpoint: Final Project Progress Self-Assessment**
14	Communication & Presentation Skills	• Norms of professional communication • How to present yourself and your skills effectively	• Work-value assessment
15	Course Wrap-Up	• Student presentations	• Post-course survey

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Professional Advisor Job Listing

Purpose of the Tool

The need for advising reform spans beyond reducing excessive caseload burdens. Too often, college advisors spend their already limited time with students dealing with lower-order priorities, such as registration and scheduling, as opposed to providing students with the personalized academic and career advice they need to achieve success. In order to elevate the role of the advisor, **Alamo Colleges** took a more comprehensive, goal-oriented approach, thereby transforming their advising from transactional to consequential. Use the sample professional advisor job listing below to recruit advisors for the new elevated position.

Comprehensive approach emphasizes advising throughout the entire college experience

Goal-oriented advising highlights the need to connect academic decisions to career goals and interests

Highlight the value of developing expertise related to advising students of diverse and underserved backgrounds

Professional Advisor

Salary Range: _____

Job Description:

This position will work closely with the Director of Student Support Services to implement intrusive advising strategies.

The Professional Advisor position promotes student learning and success by providing quality, personalized advising to students from entry through college completion, monitoring and tracking achievement of student learning outcomes, providing services to special populations when needed, advising students based on relevant, up-to-date economic information related to students' career interests, and guiding students through the process of determining their educational and career plans. The Professional Advisor enhances the college's commitment to promote a career-focused, academically rigorous, and culturally inclusive environment.

I. Key Responsibilities

- Provide advising to students from entry through completion
- Assist students in articulating and following their personal mission statements
- Guide students throughout career and pathway exploration to devise a well-informed academic and career plan aligned with students' interests and strengths
- Implement academic advising strategies and track student learning outcomes and achievement
- Respond and assist when students experience academic and career-related setbacks

II. Education and Training

- Bachelor's degree or a combination of relevant experience, education, and training that equates to the required degree
- Career Advising and Diversity Training
- Case Management and Data Collection Training

III. Experience

- Two years of related experience, preferably in a college setting
- Proficiency in résumé writing and conducting interviews
- Experience working with first-generation college students and other underrepresented student populations

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advisor Training Curriculum Builder

Purpose of the Tool

Many colleges respond to Guided Pathways' call for "intrusive advising" as a mandate to hire more advisors or implement an early academic alert system. Instead of hiring or sub-specializing advisors**, Alamo Colleges** retrain current advisors to serve as a single point of contact for students' college navigational concerns. This training transforms traditional advisors into professional advisors by reprioritizing advice from "transactional" (e.g., registration and scheduling) to "consequential" (e.g., evaluating academic, transfer, and career trade-offs). Use the guide below to develop a professional advising curriculum to inform advisors about new Guided Pathways institutional reforms and prepare them to meet students' unique needs.

1 *Identify the Appropriate Audience*

Which faculty/staff/administrators are currently providing advising or student support?

2 *Isolate the Key Teaching Points*

What are the most important elements of our institution's Guided Pathways reforms that professional advisors will need to communicate to students?

What are the essential components of consequential advising as it stands at our college (e.g., What must advisors know about at-risk populations, student outcomes, labor market data, etc.?)?

3 *Select the Most Effective Modality*

Would this training material be best conveyed in person, or is it possible to expand access through an online platform or a hybrid of the two?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advisor Training Curriculum Builder (cont.)

Professional Goal-Setting Advisor Training Curriculum Template

Expanding on your answers to the previous questions, adjust the following sample curriculum to prepare your advisors to meet your own institution's specifications. We have provided some recommended topics to be covered in each of the three levels of advising training courses based on the advisor training curriculum used at Alamo Colleges.

Level 1: Basic Advising/Student Support Certification

Curriculum Focus	Duration	Modality	Audience
Introduction to Holistic Advising			
Advising vs. Counseling vs. Coaching			
Advising Student Outcomes			
Career Coaching			
Diversity Awareness			

Level 2: General Advisor Certification

Curriculum Focus	Duration	Modality	Audience
Competency-Based Education			
Working with Veterans and Other Special Populations			
Group Advising Best Practices			
Labor Market Information			
Prior Learning Assessments			

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advisor Training Curriculum Builder (cont.)

Professional Goal-Setting Advisor Training Curriculum Template (cont.)

Level 3: Master Advisor Certification			
Curriculum Focus	**Duration**	**Modality**	**Audience**
Adult Learning and Advising Theories			
Emotional Intelligence			
Social Roles & Transitioning			
Validation Theory			
Capstone Project			

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advising Goal-Setting Metrics Scorecard

Purpose of the Tool

In addition to retraining advisors, it is essential that colleges also set concrete, manageable goals for their advisors. **Alamo Colleges** use the following metrics scorecard to measure their advising success. By setting yearly goals and tracking progress along the way, the colleges can clearly identify critical strengths and weaknesses of their advising strategies while also communicating to advisors which action steps they should prioritize. Update and share the following scorecard with advisors to record and monitor your college's advising goals.

Measure	Baseline	FY 2016 Target	FY 2016 Actual (8/31/17)	FY 2017 Target (8/31/18)	FY 2020 Target (8/31/21)	Data Source	Scorecard Complete
Student-to-Advisor Ratio (example)	900/1	450/1	405/1	350/1	350/1		
Number of Advisors Certified (example)	87	107	117	127	136		
% of Students with Formal Academic Plan					100		
% of Students with Personal Mission Statements					100		
% of Students with Nonacademic Transcripts					100		
% of Students with Advisors at 15 hours					100		
% of Students with Advisors at 30 hours					100		
% of Students with Advisors at 45 hours					100		
% of Students Taking a Student Success Course Within First Semester					100		
% of Students Satisfied with Advising					100		

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Related Program Acceptance Letter & Examples

Purpose of the Tool

High-achieving students enrolled in competitive programs of study who fail to meet a minimum GPA requirement are often at risk of stopping out. To promote student persistence and retention, advisors need to determine how best to redirect these students into programs that both have capacity and better align with the students' academic strengths. **Volunteer State Community College** sends letters to students at risk of stopping out, announcing their acceptance into a related program. Consult the abbreviated version of Volunteer State's letter below as a guideline when crafting your own new program acceptance messages to students. Refer to the callout boxes for essential elements of a successful acceptance letter.

Abbreviated Version of Volunteer State Community College's Related Program Acceptance Letter

Dear Vol State Student,

Congratulations! You have been selected as a potential candidate for our **Information Technology (IT) program**. Based on your academic acumen, we have deemed you a great fit for our IT program.

Do you enjoy helping others? Are you a team player? Then a career in Information Technology is for you! Technology is changing our world, and computing skills are in high demand. We are looking for candidates with your skill set to be a part of this exciting and important program.

The following concentrations are available:

- Cyber Defense
- Networking
- Programming
- System Analyst
- Systems Administration and Management

You may also pursue the Computer Science AS degree path, which will transfer to a university.

To learn more about our offerings, please join us at our Information Technology **Open House** on **Main Campus**, **Wednesday, May 10th, 11 am–1 pm**. Here you will have the opportunity to learn about the field, meet with specialized faculty, tour the facilities, and **speak with an advisor about your academic plan**.

To RSVP or schedule an appointment, please contact Jane Doe at emailaddress@college.edu or call XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Sincerely,

John Doe

Dean
Volunteer State Community College
1234 Street Address
City, ST 12345
Office: (123) 456-7890
emailaddress@college.edu

- Using positive language, congratulate student for "acceptance" into new program
- Explain why the student would be a good fit for the alternative program
- Highlight a variety of related certificate and career options
- Invite students to an open house to learn more about the new program, provide the location, date, and time
- Encourage students to speak with their advisor and discuss this program change

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Related Program Acceptance Letter & Examples (cont.)

Related Program Examples for Competitive-Major Stop-Outs

Most colleges are struggling to advise and redirect students who are not successful in the more challenging or competitive programs. **Volunteer State** identifies common donor and acceptor programs on campus to provide optimized alternate program recommendations to at-risk students. The donor list encompasses those programs that are most selective, while the acceptor list showcases those programs that students can easily transfer into without a substantial loss of time to degree or accumulation of excess credits since they share commonalities in course requirements. Consult the following example lists of donor and acceptor programs when identifying your institution's related programs.

Potential Donor Programs	Related Acceptor Programs
Nursing	Health Sciences, Medical Laboratory Technology, Radiologic Technology, Exercise Science
Engineering	Mathematics, Mechatronics Technology, Solar Panel Technician, Construction Management Technology, Automotive Systems Technology
Computer Science	Web Development, Computer Support Specialization, Applied Technology, Cybersecurity, Information Technology
Physics	Geosciences, Mathematics, Environmental Science
Accounting	Banking and Financial Services, Real Estate Appraisal, Business Administration, Business Analytics
Pharmacy	Pharmacy Technician, Allied Health, Medical Administrative Assistant, Medical Laboratory Technology

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advisors to Our Work

With Sincere Appreciation

The Community College Executive Forum is grateful to the individuals and organizations that shared their insights, analysis, and time with us. We would especially like to recognize the following individuals for being particularly generous with their time and expertise.

Cavil Anderson
Harrisburg Area Community College
Harrisburg, PA

Jennifer Anderson
Columbus State Community College
Columbus, OH

Shah Ardalan
Lone Star College-University Park
Houston, TX

J. David Armstrong
Broward College
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Cynthia Bambara
Allegany College of Maryland
Cumberland, MD

Michael Baston
LaGuardia Community College
Queens, NY

Shelley Blackburn
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Asheville, NC

Margaret Bowman
St. Petersburg College
St. Petersburg, FL

Kevin Brockbank
Community Colleges of Spokane
Spokane, WA

Aimee Brough
Harrisburg Area Community College
Harrisburg, PA

Wes Bryan
Golden West College
Huntington Beach, CA

Ann Buchele
Linn-Benton Community College
Albany, OR

Brittany Burgess
Launch Tennessee
Nashville, TN

Todd Butler
Jackson College
Jackson, MI

Kathleen Cleary
Sinclair Community College
Dayton, OH

Tamara Clunis
Amarillo College
Amarillo, TX

Kimberley Collins
Monroe Community College
Rochester, NY

Donald Cook
Broward College
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Ruth Dalrymple
Alamo Colleges District
San Antonio, TX

Tristan Denley
Tennessee Board of Regents
Nashville, TN

Marielena DeSanctis
Broward College
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Dorey Diab
North Central State College
Mansfield, OH

Andrew Dorsey
Front Range Community College
Westminster, CO

Cynthia Dougherty
Harrisburg Area Community College
Harrisburg, PA

Paul Drayton
Rowan College at Burlington County
Pemberton, NJ

Jonathan Dryden
Lorain County Community College
Elyria, OH

Robert Exley
Snead State Community College
Boaz, AZ

Jo-Carol Fabianke
Alamo Colleges District
San Antonio, TX

Matthew Fall
Lansing Community College
Lansing, MI

Adriana Fazano Ficano
Broward College
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Charlotte Finnegan
Jackson College
Jackson, MI

Everette Freeman
Community College of Denver
Denver, CO

Jeremy Frew
Jackson College
Jackson, MI

Mary Beth Furst
Howard Community College
Columbia, MD

Abel Gage
Skagit Valley College
Mt Vernon, WA

Patricia Gentile
North Shore Community College
Danvers, MA

Susan Goff
Clackamas Community College
Oregon City, OR

Leigh Goodson
Tulsa Community College
Tulsa, OK

Frank Gornick
West Hills Community College District
Coalinga, CA

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advisors to Our Work (cont.)

Gayle Greene
Wake Technical Community College
Raleigh, NC

David Harrison
Columbus State Community College
Columbus, OH

Vicki Hawsey-Karolewics
Wallace State Community College
Hanceville, AL

Stephen Head
Lone Star College System
The Woodlands, TX

Heather Hill
Stanly Community College
Albemarle, NC

Samuel Hirsch
Community College of Philadelphia
Philadelphia, PA

Susan Huard
Manchester Community College
Manchester, NH

Stan Jensen
Henry Ford College
Dearborn, MI

Christine Johnson
Community Colleges of Spokane
Spokane, WA

Timothy Jones
Chesapeake College
Wye Mills, MD

Denise King
Cleveland State Community College
Cleveland, TN

Ron Layne
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Asheville, NC

Kathy Maalouf
Miami Dade College
Miami, FL

Irene Malmgren
Mt. San Antonio College
Walnut, CA

Justene Malosh
Linn-Benton Community College
Albany, OR

Angie Martin
Iowa Central Community College
Fort Dodge, IA

Staci Martin
Kilgore College
Kilgore, TX

Kelli Maxwell
Community College of Allegheny County
Allegheny County, PA

Susan Mayer
Achieving the Dream
Silver Spring, MD

Kay McClenney
American Association of Community Colleges
Washington, DC

Mark McColloch
Community College of Baltimore County
Baltimore, MD

Matthew McCrickard
Wallace State Community College
Hanceville, AL

Johnny McCoy
Wallace State Community College
Hanceville, AL

James McGrail
Eastern Gateway Community College
Steubenville, OH

Edward Meadows
Pensacola State College
Pensacola, FL

Cynthia Mendiola-Perez
Alamo Colleges District
San Antonio, TX

Ted Miller
Jackson College
Jackson, MI

Tom Olliff
Broward College
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Erica Orians
Michigan Center for Student Success
Lansing, MI

Sandra Palmer
Queensborough Community College
Bayside, NY

Steve Partridge
Northern Virginia Community College
Springfield, VA

George Pimentel
Volunteer State Community College
Gallatin, TN

David Plotkin
Clackamas Community College
Oregon City, OR

Omid Pourzanjani
Golden West College
Huntington Beach, CA

James Preston
West Hills Community College
Coalinga, CA

Avis Proctor
Broward College
Fort Lauderdale, CA

Tim Putnum
North Iowa Area Community College
Mason City, IA

Clayton Railey
Chesapeake College
Wye Mills, MD

Gretchen Robertson
Skagit Valley College
Mt Vernon, WA

Bryan Ryan
Wake Technical Community College
Raleigh, NC

Timothy Sandoe
Harrisburg Area Community College
Harrisburg, PA

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

Advisors to Our Work (cont.)

Bill Scroggins
Mt. San Antonio College
Walnut, CA

Stephanie Shanblatt
Bucks County Community College
Newtown, PA

Sandy Shugart
Valencia College
Orlando, FL

Philip Sisson
Middlesex Community College
Bedford, MA

Tomesa Smith
Wallace State Community College
Hanceville, LA

Rick Smyre
Center for Communities of the Future
Gastonia, NC

Diane Snyder
Alamo Colleges District
San Antonio, TX

David Spang
Rowan College at Burlington College
Pemberton, NJ

Karen Steele
Queensborough Community College
Bayside, NY

Beth Stewart
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Asheville, NC

Lori Suddick
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
Green Bay, WI

John Sygielski
Harrisburg Area Community College
Harrisburg, PA

Maggie de la Teja
Tarrant County College
Fort Worth, TX

Kathryn Thirolf
Jackson College
Jackson, MI

Steven Thomas
Harford Community College
Bel Air, MD

J. Michael Thompson
Cuyahoga Community College
Highland Hills, OH

Kathy Ulibarri
Central New Mexico Community College
Albuquerque, NM

James Vander Hooven
Mount Wachusett Community College
Gardner, MA

Nathan Venske
Jackson College
Jackson, MI

Barbara Viniar
Chesapeake College
Wye Mills, MD

Andrea Wade
Monroe Community College
Rochester, NY

Mona Walters
Edison State Community College
Piqua, OH

Bill Waters
Clackamas Community College
Oregon City, OR

Dee Wigner
Garden City Community College
Garden City, KS

Kathie Winograd
Central New Mexico Community College
Albuquerque, NM

Rebekah Wood
Jackson College
Jackson, MI

Richard Woodfield
Zane State College
Zanesville, OH

Thomas Ybarra
Yakima Valley Community College
Yakima, WA

©2018 EAB Global, Inc. • All Rights Reserved • 35961

35961
Cover image: iStock

Washington DC | Richmond | Birmingham | Minneapolis
P 202.747.1000 | **F** 202.747.1010 | **eab.com**