State of the Union for Community College Enrollment and Emerging Promising Practices

Prepared for North Central State College
Searching for Growth Markets Amidst Stagnating Demographics
Honey, I Shrunk the Class

High School Graduate Growth Rate Plateaus Before Precipitous Decline

Number of High School Graduates and Compound Annual Growth Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>-1.4%</td>
<td>+0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>+1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>+0.6%</td>
<td>-1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in High School Graduates from School Year 2012-2013, by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2019-2020</th>
<th>2024-2025</th>
<th>2029-2030</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>-11,500</td>
<td>24,900</td>
<td>-45,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>-41,200</td>
<td>-29,700</td>
<td>-26,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>-42,000</td>
<td>-26,200</td>
<td>-72,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>32,200</td>
<td>117,900</td>
<td>7,100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EAB analysis of WICHE data.
The primary challenge for the two-year sector in the next fifteen years is clear: dramatically reduced enrollments. Indeed, the expected rate of contraction in two-year enrollments is almost 20% faster than for college enrollments in general.

Nathan Grawe, *Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education*, 2018
As Ohio Goes, So Goes the Nation

Poised to Graduate Fewer But More Diverse K-12 Students, Like Rest of U.S.

Change in Number of High School Graduates, 2005-2015 Vs. 2016-2031

*Data Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

- **2005-2015:** -4%
- **2016-2031:** -11%

Hispanic, White, and Black Students as a Share of All High School Graduates, 2016 Vs. 2031

*Data Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*

- **White:**
  - 2016/17: 75%
  - 2031/32: 72%

- **Black:**
  - 2016/17: 13%
  - 2031/32: 15%

- **Hispanic:**
  - 2016/17: 3%
  - 2031/32: 8%

Source: Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates, *Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education*, 2016, [www.wiche.edu/knocking](http://www.wiche.edu/knocking); EAB interviews and analysis.
Government Funding Below Pre-Recession Levels

Changes in Per Student State Spending, 2008-2017

Small Uptick in Funding Barely Improves Budgets

\[3.4\%\]
Average increase in state funding, 2015-2017

\[\$430M\]
Federal funding to two-year colleges, 2007-2016

\[\$85M\]
Local funding to two-year colleges, 2007-2016

Declines No Longer a “Post-Recession” Story
Community College Enrollments Now Failing to Clear Pre-2008 Mark

Enrollment Declines Haven’t Slowed Since Recession
Fall Enrollments in Public 2-Year Colleges, in Millions

- Tuition Increases Attempt—But Fail—to Compensate for Enrollment Declines
  - Increase in tuition and fees since 2010: 32%
  - Decline in tuition-based revenue since 2010: $166M

Critical Declines in Key Populations

Traditional Pipeline is Leaking
Two-Year Enrollments of Key Segments, 2011-2015

1) First-generation student enrollments are from 2012 and 2016, because of data availability

Current Makeup of Community College Students

- 35% Ages 25+
- 23% Ages 18-19
- 36% First-Generation

Source: Digest of Education Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics; Nathan D. Grawe, Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018); EAB interviews and analysis.
Economic Growth Means Adult Enrollments Slide

Recent, Projected Employment Gains Draw Adults Away from Higher Ed

Relying on Recessions

Two-year enrollments of 25–34-year-olds, in millions

Economic growth forecasts based on Federal Reserve projections of economic growth.

Little Relief in Sight

2.4% Federal Reserve-projected growth in GDP in 2019

3.5% Projected unemployment rate in 2019-2020

Opportunity: Career-Aligned Education

CTE Expanding, But Colleges Should Be Cautious

Growing Popularity of Career Education

“Let’s open vocational schools so our future workers can learn a craft and realize their full potential”

President Trump

236%
Increase in certificates between 2000 and 2014

90%
Of certificates are Career and Technical Education

But High Costs Suggest Unrestricted Launch Not the Answer

Cost of Instruction per FTE at Utah Community College

$7,471
College Avg

$10,228
CTE

“We are in an environment where it’s almost impossible to start a new [CTE] program without underwriting it. Even if students and employers might want a program, you can’t charge enough to cover it and general funds can’t take on additional stress.”

Community College President


1) Six-Year college graduation rate.
Opportunity: Dual Enrollment Growth

All In on Dual Enrollment

Concerns About Culture Obscure Opportunity for Long-Term Growth

Dual Enrollment On the Rise

72%
Increase in dual enrolled students, 2005-2015

30
States include dual enrollment as indicator of K-12 school quality

But Skepticism on Campus

“Dual enrollment has impacted our business—the enrollment aspect—negatively, and I’m not sure we’re doing right by students.”

Community College President Midwest

Colleges Can’t Afford Inaction

1
A [Rare] Reliable Enrollment Stream
10% of two-year students are under 18

30
States include dual enrollment as indicator of K-12 school quality

But Skepticism on Campus

“Dual enrollment has impacted our business—the enrollment aspect—negatively, and I’m not sure we’re doing right by students.”

Community College President Midwest

Dual Enrollment Protocol Perpetuates Status Quo

Perceived Equalizer Furthers Divide Between College-Going and Not

While Advanced Coursework Benefits Extend Beyond High School...

Dual-enrolled students who go to college (compared to 80% of non-dual-enrolled students)¹

85%

First-year students felt confident in their ability to complete that term’s course work due to prior AP, IB, or dual enrollment coursework

8 in 11

...Too Often Dual Enrollment Is Limited...

Dual Enrollment Screening Criteria

• High GPA
• “College Readiness”
• Academically Rigorous Schedule
• Teacher Recommendation
• Minimum Attendance

...Furthering a Culture of “College for Some”

Profile of a Typical Dual Enrollment Student

• White
• Female
• Middle/Upper Class
• Academically Top Quartile
• Few Absences


¹) Study controlled for variables such as high school achievement and race
Teach College-Level Communication to All High Schoolers

Available Dual Enrollment Courses

- Interpersonal Communication (3 Credits)
- Intercultural Communication (3 Credits)

Criteria for Dual Enrollment Programming

Relevant for Future: Dual enrollment teaches skills needed regardless of student destination.

Relevant for All Students: Students finds learning goals applicable to daily life.

Appropriate for All: Courses have no high school equivalent, so courses are a new experience for all students.

Dual Enrollment Students at Merritt College

- 2014: 455
- 2017: 1450

Dual Enrollment Spikes After First HS Adopts Courses

- Student persistence rate after taking dual enrollment course: 38%

Profiled Institution:
Merritt College
Oakland, CA

- Feeder high schools: average 82% economically disadvantaged students
- Median Household Income: $43K

1) Students where both parents have not received a high school diploma, or students eligible for free or reduced lunch, or students who are migrant, homeless, or foster care.
Opportunity: Destination of Choice for Part-Time Students

Part-Time Students Can’t Be a “Silent” Majority

Failure to Adequately Serve Part-Time Students Has Significant Costs

A Revolving Door

Part-Time Student Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates At Public Two-Year Colleges

61% Of students enrolled part-time between 2007-2016

Costly Consequences of Poor Part-Time Retention

1.7M Part-time students stopped out since Fall 2016

$135 Mean cost/credit hour at two-year colleges

$228M Tuition revenue lost for each credit not taken

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), National Center for Education Statistics; Elyssa Kirkham, "Study: Here’s How Much College Credits Actually Cost", Student Loan Hero analysis of NCES data, January 24, 2018; EAB interviews and analysis.
Part-Time Students Are Adult Students

Part-time students are largely older, working adults who attend community college to build their job-related skill set, with no intent to complete.

Most Effective Strategy

Part-Time Students Must Increase Credit Load to Succeed

The only way to ensure success is by increasing part-time students’ credit load and by incenting them to attend college full-time.

Level of Impact

Part-Time Student Success Requires Massive Overhaul

Because they spend less time on campus, it is impossible to generate part-time student success at scale without unsustainable investments.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
The Race Against the Clock

All Students Less Likely to Persist the Longer They Remain in College

Enrollment Figures at a Mid-Atlantic Community College

Attrition Rates

-39% - 27% - 15% - 23% - 9%

Risk Especially High for Part-Timers, Who Typically Take Longer to Finish

Average Number of Years Needed to Complete Credential, Full-Time Versus Part-Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-Year Certificate</th>
<th>2-Year Associate Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-Time</td>
<td>Part-Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-Time</td>
<td>Part-Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summer Momentum Incentives

Summer Courses Build Part-Time Student Momentum

Financially Incentivize Summer Courses to Prevent Part-Time Stop-Out

Encourage Students to Save Time (to Degree) and Money

If You’ve Successfully Completed...

18 Credits during this school year’s fall and spring terms
You Can Earn 1 Free summer course

24 Or more credits during this school year’s fall and spring terms
Free summer courses 2

Criteria for Student Selection

• Must have earned the designated credit requirement within the current academic year
• Must resolve any outstanding account holds before summer credit waiver can be applied

Incentivizing Even Just One Summer Course Increases Persistence

2% Percentage-point increase in part-time student spring-to-fall persistence after one summer of implementation

$258 Yearly tuition savings for students receiving one free summer course

Summer credit can be applied only to academic courses. (Students are strongly encouraged to take summer courses within their program of study.)

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Student Obstacles Pile Up over 16 Weeks

Traditional Term Lengths Increase Opportunities for ‘Life to Get in the Way’

Part-Time Students Susceptible to the Wheel of Misfortune

- Shift Change at Work
- Loss of Childcare
- Medical Emergency
- Car Breakdown
- Food Insecurity
- Housing Instability
- Family Emergency
- Job Loss

Longer Terms, Larger Gamble

“In 16-week courses, we have students that are passing with A’s and when they hit the 12th week of class they just stop coming because something happened in life and they lost out…

“For no apparent reason, the 16-week semester gives too many opportunities for something to happen and for life to get in the way.”

Director of Institutional Research
Community College, Texas

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Compressed Term Scheduling

Compressed Terms Reduce the Cost of Misfortunes

Mini-Semesters Allow Part-Time Students to Hedge Their Bets

Compressed Terms Minimize the Cost of Life Interruptions

Week 0  Week 4  Week 8  Week 12  Week 16

7-Week Fall Semester I → 7-Week Fall Semester II

- New student enrolls in two 3-credit courses; each course runs 7 weeks
- Earns 6 credits at end of Week 7
- Completes 4 weeks of Fall II semester before unavoidable withdrawal
- 6 credits earned total; only makes up two courses to earn 12 credits

Serious Life Circumstance Forces Withdrawal

Trident Tech’s Mini-Terms Improve Course Success and Retention Rates

+14 Percentage-point increase in course pass rates after implementing mini-terms
87% Fall-to-spring retention rate after mini-term implementation, the highest in the college’s history

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Compressed Term Scheduling

Default Mini-Terms Increase Credit Accumulation

Standardized Compressed Term Scheduling Builds Momentum

Multiple Compressed Term Options Accommodate Part-Time Lifestyle

Sample Year-Round Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 1</td>
<td>Aug. 28-Oct. 23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 1</td>
<td>Jan. 1-Feb. 26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 1</td>
<td>May 7-Jun. 29</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2</td>
<td>Oct. 30-Dec. 22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2</td>
<td>Mar. 5-Apr. 30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2</td>
<td>Jul. 9-Aug. 27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30 Number of total credits accumulated in calendar year

Student Success Results Prove Good Reason for Mini-Term Popularity

30% Percentage-point increase in course completion rates compared to 16-week term

97% Completion rate for students taking at least 24 credits per year

$10M Projected additional revenue if overall college retention rate increases to match current mini-semester’s
Preventing Early Attrition by Inflecting Applicant-to-Registrant Conversion
“Many of the student services operations where we’re seeing very low conversions have very little communication. They say, ‘Here’s your ID number—good luck!’ Everything is on the student, but the students we see today need constant reminders.”

Kathi Swanson, President
Clarus Corporation

Conversion Rates Declining Absent Guidance from College

Students Slipping Through Our Fingers
Community College Applicant Conversion Rates¹

Cannot Afford a Hands-Off Approach


¹) EAB data analysis across 45 two-year public community colleges for which application and enrollment data is available
Learning By Doing

Forum Researchers Gather Student Experiences of Intake Processes

Back to School (Secret) Shopping
*CCEF Enrollment Pain Point Visits*

- 150 member community college campuses visited during peak registration for Fall and Spring
- 22 states visited in total (Note: Only partially influenced by their scenic locations)

Adopting the Student Perspective
*Guiding Principles for the Research Team*

- **Assume Nothing**
  Follow campus signage and staff instructions to navigate intake as new student would

- **Consider the Outliers**
  Document experience of several student archetypes to capture nuances in intake practices

- **Aim for Enrollment**
  Complete as many enrollment steps as possible over the course of a single campus visit

600+
Total number of observation hours invested in campus visits, phone conversations with members, and report construction

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Most Common Enrollment Pain Points

Students Encounter Obstacles, Information Inconsistencies During Onboarding

• Campus navigation inconsistent
• Time in orientation not optimized for delivery of critical information
• Missed opportunity for Q&A, and post-application follow-up sporadic

Onboarding Optimized for Traditional Students

• Non-traditional students encounter difficulty accessing assistance from staff
• Lack of supportive language creates psychological barriers
• Over-promotion of online resources rather than in-person interventions

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Move from Open Access to Equitable Access

How do we provide proactive and personalized guidance from intake through the first day of class?

Streamline Enrollment Experiences

- Temporary Campus Signage
- Non-Cognitive Needs Assessment and Resource Matching
- Missing Step Enrollment Prompts
- Just-in-Time Text Nudges

How do we flex standardized processes to create a welcoming environment for all students?

Remove Barriers for Non-Traditional Students

- Positive Front-Line Language
- Placement Via Multiple Measures
- Financial Award Estimate
- Bursar Hold Override

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Where Am I?

Traversing Campus Often a Struggle For New Students

The Never-Ending Enrollment Maze

Apply to College → Accepted → Advising Center → Testing Center → Parking Services → Orientation → Financial Aid → Register → Payment Center → Day One of Class

Use Signage to Reduce Confusion

Effective Campus Signs:

- Are eye-catching and easy to read
- Are located in high-traffic areas
- Provide direction to important points of interest

Average number of stops to student services offices per campus visit across 150+ CCEF Enrollment Pain Point Visits

5

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Proactive Service-Matching

Using Intake Survey Results to Identify and Push Relevant Resources

Mount Wachusett’s Personalized Resource Nudges

New Student Intake Survey

30-question survey collects information about risk factors like family support, transportation, financial literacy, etc. Survey required during placement test.

Campus Services Referral Matrix

Assistant Dean of Student Services assembles team to create matrix. Each question on intake survey corresponds with relevant services.

Personalized Resource Nudges

Nudges follow four key rules:
- Element of personalization
- Relevant information
- Timeliness or urgency
- Call to action and next step

Improved Student Performance

Increase in fall-to-fall persistence rate of first-time, full-time 2013 cohort, compared to 2012 cohort.

20%
Lake-Sumter Sends Calls-to-Action for Each Remaining Enrollment Step

**Reaching Applicants at Little Cost**

1. **Select Topic**: Each prompt focuses on one step such as FAFSA, orientation, registration, or course payment.

2. **Draft Email**: Admissions staff draft brief email template with instructions to complete selected step.

3. **Identify Recipients**: Admissions staff download list of applicants missing selected step from SIS.

4. **Conduct Mail Merge**: Staff send out emails personalized with applicants’ names.

Over half of applicants receive at least one email prompt and may respond for further clarification.

**Short Email Goes Long Way**

- **62%**: Applicant conversion rate in 2015, compared to 59% in 2013.

- **$191K**: Estimated additional tuition revenue per year.

1) Assumes students enrolled in an average of 20 credits per year at in-state tuition rate.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Not Your Typical Administrative Letter

Informal, Jargon-Free, and Personalized Messages Prioritize Clarity

Prompting Next Steps with Brief Emails

Sample Email for Applicants Missing Orientation

Hi Jane,
All new LSSC students are required to attend orientation. If you haven’t already registered for orientation, please do so by clicking [here](#) and following the instructions by August 1. If you have already scheduled your orientation session, please disregard this message and we will see you soon!

Let me know if you have any questions.

John

John Doe
Director of Admissions
Lake-Sumter State College
1234 Street Address
City, ST 12345
Office: (123) 456-7890
emailaddress@college.edu

Like us on Facebook for the latest LSSC news and events!
Non-Registrant Phone Survey

Glendale Addresses Barriers to Enrollment Before Classes Start

**What Prevents Our Applicants from Registering?**

- Surveys non-registering applicants to uncover why they do not enroll
- Hires call center to conduct survey two weeks before classes start for $3,500
- Provides call center with 4-question script; last question asks if applicants need assistance from college staff

**Converting Lost Applicants**

- 621 Applicants contacted
- 121 Applicants enrolled
- $111K Estimated tuition revenue generated

**Developing an In-House Alternative**

- Summer phone bank staffed by 1 supervisor and 5 part-time call agents
- 4-hour training teaches agents to answer FAQs and refer applicants to relevant services
- In-house solution provides applicants with personal touchpoints from college personnel

1) Assumes students enrolled in an average of 20 units per year at in-state tuition rate

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
A Real One-Stop Shop

Rogue Community College’s Enrollment Case Manager Model

Central Case Manager Key to Minimizing New Student Effort

Peer Ambassador Welcomes Student

- Peer ambassadors greet incoming students to Rogue Central
- Students input ID number and reason for visit into tracking system and wait for assistance
- Ambassadors guide students to self-service channels when appropriate (e.g., print schedule, submit form)

Case Manager Answers Questions

- All case managers located in separate room from wait area to protect student privacy
- Case manager works with student one-on-one until inquiries answered
- Visits short, typically lasting ~6 minutes

Case Manager Calls Back-Office Staff

- In few cases, case manager may not be able to answer student questions
- Case manager calls staff in student services offices to inquire on behalf of student
- Students do not interact with back-office staff, even if inquiries are complex

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
One and Done

Case Manager Model Eliminates Cross-Department Student Transfers

100 Students Walk Into Rogue Central...

Average Intervention Experience for New Students at Rogue Community College

Empowering Peer Ambassadors

- 12-14 Peer Ambassadors
- Work 20 hours/week in paid positions
- Current students at Rogue Community College

Cross-Training Case Managers

- Must have at least an A.A. degree and some customer service background
- Undergo 1 year of immersive cross-training

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Nudging Students Keeps Your College Top-of-Mind

Text Message Campaigns Deliver Timely Reminders

Overview of Text Message Nudging Process

- **Collect Student Information**
  - Counselor records
  - Flyers with phone number students can text for assistance
  - Student surveys

- **Create Message Templates and Schedule**
  - Key nudging milestones:
    - Application deadlines
    - Financial aid deadlines
    - Enrollment deposit
    - Orientation
    - Placement tests
    - Course registration

- **Deliver Messages and Provide Support**
  - One FTE at the Minnesota Office of Higher Education supports 2,000+ students
    - About 10 hours per week spent answering messages

Prominent Text Messaging Vendors

- Hustle
- SignalVine
- Student Vox
- Mongoose
- AdmitHub

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Key Principles of Successful Messaging Campaigns

Short, Relevant Content Aligns With Student Communication Preferences

Tips for Engaging Students With Text Messages

**Personalization**
Include relevant student information and the counselor/advisor’s name, especially in the first message.

**Opt-Out**
Let students know that they always have the option to text back STOP or CANCEL to stop receiving messages.

**Less is More**
Keep messages short—distilling content down to its main point ensures students can digest information quickly.

**Frequency**
The recommended number of prescheduled or programmed messages is 2-5 per month.

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Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Key Principles… (Cont.)

Actionable, Just-in-Time Messages Increase Likelihood of Step Completion

Tips for Engaging Students With Text Messages

Call to Action
Include a short link to a resource or have the student respond to a simple yes/no question about their progress.

Urgency
When possible, create urgency by including dates and sending messages about 3 days prior to deadlines.

Interactive
Staff should monitor and reply to messages the hour after a programmed message is sent.

Prepared Responses
Prepare responses to common or anticipated questions in advance to avoid duplicative or inconsistent work.

Hi [first_name]! The FAFSA is key to helping you get money for college. Have you submitted the FAFSA yet? Reply yes/no.

No, not yet.

There’s still time! You and your parents can use tax info from 2016, too. Apply here for $ for college: https://fafsa.gov

Full list of tips available

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Move from Open Access to Equitable Access

Streamline Enrollment Experiences
- Temporary Campus Signage
- Non-Cognitive Needs Assessment and Resource Matching
- Missing Step Enrollment Prompts
- Just-in-Time Text Nudges

Remove Barriers for Non-Traditional Students
- Positive Front-Line Language
- Placement Via Multiple Measures
- Financial Award Estimate
- Bursar Hold Override

How do we provide proactive and personalized guidance throughout onboarding?

How do we flex standardized processes to create a welcoming environment for all students?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Serving a Non-Traditional Population

Growing Percentage of Students Associated with Unique Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Non-Traditional Students</th>
<th>Enrollment Driven by Students From High Risk Tiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low-income</td>
<td>+91% <em>Growth in Pell Grant recipients enrolled in CCs, 2006-07 to 2011-12</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time employment while enrolled</td>
<td>41% <em>Part-time students working full-time</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-generation</td>
<td>36% <em>CC students who are first-generation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 years of age and older</td>
<td>35% <em>CC students 25 years of age and older in 2015</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time enrollment</td>
<td>61% <em>Students enrolled part-time in Fall 2016</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#5 Positive Front-Line Language

## Say This, Not That

Front-Line Staff Language Can Pose an Unintentional Barrier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When Staff Say...</th>
<th>Students Think It Means...</th>
<th>Instead, Say...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Just go online”</td>
<td>“I’m not going to help you”</td>
<td>“We want you to be successful and self-sufficient, but are here to support you”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It’s on you”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You don’t need to worry about that”</td>
<td>“You won’t understand”</td>
<td>“Right now, I’d prioritize X. Here’s why”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“College is not high school”</td>
<td>“You’re not ready for this”</td>
<td>“College involves a lot of exciting opportunities, but it’s important to be organized and prepared. We can help you with that”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Don’t waste our time”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do You Speak Higher Ed?

Students Unfamiliar with College-Specific Jargon

Seemingly Foreign Language

Common Higher Education Terminology

- Prerequisite
- FAFSA
- Credit Hours
- Syllabus
- Semester
- Course Catalog
- Bursar
- Course Sequence
- Registrar
- Liberal Arts
- Distribution
- Developmental
- Disbursement
- Program of Study

Jargon Abundant on Student Portals

Community College Journal Study of Accessibility and Usability of College Websites

Students surveyed who were confused by higher education terms on institutional websites¹

“We realized that we were explaining things from the point of view of the college, but new students don’t know that language yet.”

Dr. Joyce Romano, Vice President Student Affairs
Valencia College

¹n=30

Jargon Reduction Audit

Translating Student-Facing Material to Student-Friendly Language

Simplifying Content Reduces Call Volume

In 2001, measured spike in call and email volume for FAQs answered online

Gunning-Fog Index calculates reading level required to read online content

Removed jargon, used active voice, and simplified language used on website

Drop in Travelocity helpline call volume after website improvement

5%

Translating Financial Aid Language

Before: The Carolina Computing Initiative ensures that students have access to high-quality and affordable technology. Through CCI, all students are required to own a laptop computer, and grants are available to help eligible students purchase their laptops.

Gunning Fog Index Score: 17.2

After: UNC requires you to have a laptop computer. If you can’t afford one, grants are available.

Gunning Fog Index Score: 10.7

Remediation in Community College

Remediation Trends at Community College
Percent of Students at Two-Year Public Colleges Who Enrolled in Remedial Courses by Cohort (NCES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Ever</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014-15*</td>
<td>46.1%¹</td>
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Student Report
Results from 2017 CCSSE

- **29%** Have enrolled in a developmental math course
- **20%** Have enrolled in a developmental writing course
- **18%** Have enrolled in a developmental reading course

The Remediation Trap?

- **20%** Of students referred to developmental math pass an entry-level college course within three years
- **37%** Of students referred to developmental reading pass an entry-level college course within three years


¹ Proportion of entering students in the 2014 CCSSE SENSE survey who enrolled in a developmental course following a placement test.
#7 Placement Via Multiple Measures

The Problem with Placement

Placement Methods Differ Drastically

*Common Methods of Course Placement*

- Placement Tests (e.g., Accuplacer, Compass)
- ACT/SAT Scores
- State-level Assessments
- High School GPA

But More Really is Better

*Advantages of Multiple Measures*

- Students are more likely to be placed in college-level courses
- Placement gap narrows between students of colors and White peers
- Students are more likely to succeed

“...cumulative high school GPA is the most consistently useful predictor of success across levels of math and English coursework...for students who matriculate directly from high school and students who delay matriculation.”

Bahr et al., 2017

Financial Needs Prove Powerful Driver of Attrition

And New-to-College Students Are More Likely to Feel the Burden

Multitude of Living Expenses Increases Need for Student Aid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Costs</th>
<th>Indirect Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition and Fees</td>
<td>Books and Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Family Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite Increased Debt, Part-Time Students Lack Financial Advising

31% Of first-generation students report relying on student loans to pay for college

56% Of first-generation students report using their colleges’ financial advising services just once or never

And Are More Likely to Stop Out as a Result

50% Of current first-generation students report being likely or very likely to withdraw from college due to finances

Source: CCSSE 2017; EAB interviews and analysis.
SFCC Sends Personalized Award Letters to Prospects Who Submit FAFSA

#8 Personalized Award Estimates

Preliminary Financial Aid Estimates

Early Outreach to a Targeted Prospect Pool

Sends financial aid award estimates to all prospects who list SFCC on FAFSA

Calculates net cost of attendance for each prospect based on Pell eligibility

Mails letters out within one week of receiving prospect’s FAFSA record

10K+

Number of financial aid estimates sent out per year

Letters Highlight Low Cost of Attendance

Financial Aid Estimate Letter (Simplified)

Tuition and Fees $5,389
Estimated Pell Award $5,645
Net Cost $0.00

Possible Additional Funding Sources
- State grants
- Institutional grants
- Work-study earnings
- Student loans

10K+

Number of financial aid estimates sent out per year

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Early Financial Aid Estimates Promote Application and Matriculation

Marjorie Davis, Director of Financial Aid
Spokane Falls Community College

“Putting University Costs In Perspective

“When students start hearing from the four-year universities they applied to, they see that the cost of attendance is $20,000 once they include the dorms and all the other things they might have to pay for if they leave town. We get our preliminary letter to them first. Hopefully their parents are looking at our letter. Then, as those other award letters come in, they have a little more perspective.”

Driving Enrollment Growth

FTE at Spokane Falls Community College

Fall 2013: 4,101
Fall 2014: 4,342

6% increase

First class that received financial aid estimates

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Prevent Drops Due to Non-Payment

Multi-Office Intervention Removes Unnecessary Financial Barriers

Four-Step Registration Assurance Process

1. Identify Students at Risk of Registration Penalties
   - Enrollment Center sends a list of students who are at risk of being dropped for non-payment (DFNP) to Financial Aid

2. Intervene on Behalf of Aid-Eligible Students
   - Financial Aid office reviews FAFSA records for DFNP students and prevents students who are aid-eligible from being dropped

3. Alert Students to Complete Financial Aid Documents
   - Aid-eligible students are contacted via multiple channels to complete outstanding documents

4. Provide Payment Options for Remaining Balance
   - Students are provided with payment plan options depending on the amount owed

Helping Students Claim Funds Left on the Table

22% of eligible CA community college students don’t receive Pell funding

Golden West’s Multipronged Approach to Raise Financial Aid Awareness

- Email
- Phone Call
- Text Messaging
- Multilingual Workshops

Dramatically Reducing DFNP Rates

1) Calculated by dividing number of students dropped by number of those originally placed on DFNP list

Source: “Money Left on the Table: An Analysis of Pell Grant Receipt Among Financially Eligible Community College Students in California,” UC Davis Center for Community College Research and Leadership, April 2018; EAB interviews and analysis.