

CCCS Office of Institutional Research Report
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RESEARCH OFFICE

The overarching objective of the Office of Institutional Research (IR) is to generate better data and information to create the capacity to drive policy that supports the community college mission and the students we serve. Everything the office does supports the CCCS vision and mission. The ways in which CCCS strategic goals are supported include the following:

STUDENT ACCESS GOAL:

All Coloradans shall have access to comprehensive community college educational programs.

- The Research Office tracks Student FTE compared to the same day in the previous year and compared to the state appropriation for the system and by college to determine FTE growth and compare it to funding.
- Annually, a Fact Book is prepared and available online that provides summary enrollment, demographic, and completion data. It can be found at <http://www.cccs.edu/Docs/Research/AY08FactBook.pdf>. The Fact Book for academic year 2009 is in progress.
- The Research Office has created service area demographics and maps. These are located at <http://www.cccs.edu/Docs/Research/System%20Enrollment%20Maps--200720-2.pdf>.
- To support planning efforts, the Research Office has recently completed a report exploring the relationship between economic trends and enrollment trends. This report is available at <http://www.cccs.edu/Docs/Research/CO%20Economy%20and%20CCCSenrollment.pdf>.

STUDENT SUCCESS GOALS:

The demands of Colorado businesses and communities shall be met through the development of a highly skilled work force.

- Currently, the Research Office is creating a Job Placement Analysis report in which job placement, demand for jobs in the area of training, and wages are being analyzed.

- This spring, using data from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, wage gains for CCCS exiters will be evaluated along with determining the “tipping point” of credit hour and/or degree attainment necessary for students to make a significant wage gain and/or earn a living wage.
- The Research Office prepares an annual report analyzing degrees awarded throughout the system. This report documents how many degrees were awarded in various programs, as well as the number of statewide annual job openings in those areas. The academic year 2008 report is available on the CCCS website at <http://www.cccs.edu/Docs/Research/Degrees%2007-08.pdf>. Analysis of academic year 2009 is in progress.

Colorado students shall have seamless opportunities to transition from high school into college and from two-year institutions into four-year institutions.

- In cooperation with CCD, the Research Office recently provided data on CCD’s FastStart program to the Community College Research Center (CCRC). In May 2009, the Community College Research Center (CCRC), Teachers College at Columbia University received a \$5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to build a rigorous base of research knowledge on strategies for accelerating progression and increasing success among low-income young adults attending community colleges. This three-year project will produce a set of concrete recommendations to help the foundation select effective investments for its Postsecondary Success (PS) initiative, with the goal of doubling the number of low-income adults who by age 26 earn a postsecondary degree or credential—an increase of about 250,000 graduates each year.

CCRC has chosen the FastStart program at CCD and the Learning Community program at FRCC as part of their research. This is a great opportunity for these programs as it will give them national exposure and more importantly put them in position for future Gates Foundation funding. CCCS IR worked with CCD and CCRC to provide the cohort data required for the FastStart evaluation. This data came from our Student Tracking System (STS).

- The State Assigned Student ID, created to track students through their K-12 education, is required to be reported by all colleges for all Colorado-educated college students beginning this year. The Research Office is working to integrate this into the application process for a seamless ability to track students from kindergarten through their community college years.

Colorado students shall have the opportunity to succeed through high quality, cutting-edge instruction and educational services.

- The Research Office is continuing to build and improve a Student Tracking System (STS) that enables CCCS to track success of students over time. This winter,

Unemployment Insurance data from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment will be matched with data in the STS.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE GOAL:

The financial stability of the system's institutions and the physical safety of its students shall be ensured.

- FY enrollment reports sent to the Colorado Department of Higher Education are overseen by the Research Office to ensure accuracy and validity of data that are instrumental in CCCS budget appropriations.
- The Research Office verifies the colleges' College Opportunity Fund (COF) reports that are vital to the financial operation of CCCS. After the submission of 2009 Summer Correction Files, CCCS earned \$10.8 million from COF, 109 percent of the CCCS appropriation for the term. The initial fall COF file was submitted in late September, and showed preliminary earnings of \$39.6 million, 103 percent of the CCCS appropriation for the term. With budget cuts retroactive to the 2009 academic year, the COF stipend effective fall 2008 through summer 2010 decreased from \$92 per credit hour to \$62.

COLORADO FIRST & EXISTING INDUSTRY GRANTS PROGRAM

The CFEI programs were designed in 1984 and 1989 to support economic development efforts in Colorado by enhancing companies' economic competitiveness thereby not only creating but maintaining good, quality jobs in our state. Both programs improve employment opportunities throughout the state. The Colorado First Customized Job Training Program assists expanding companies with short-term training for their employees in firms that are relocating to or growing in Colorado. Colorado First grants train only net new hires, e.g. employees hired into new positions that have recently been created in Colorado. The Existing Industry program was created to maintain the competitiveness of Colorado's existing industrial base. The program's purpose is to provide essential skills re-training to the states' work force in order to retain Colorado companies that are facing technological challenges in maintaining their competitiveness and/or are in danger of downsizing or closing operations in the state.

The corporate learning divisions in Colorado's community colleges work in their communities to recognize companies that require employee training. They are experts in customized corporate training, computer training, interpersonal skills development and technical training needed to upgrade proficiency, improve performance and increase organizational efficiencies. They acquaint companies with Colorado First and Existing Industry grants and assist in writing grant proposals. This opportunity is the first step toward building the relationships that open the door for understanding companies' educational needs and connecting to companies. Community colleges can subsequently develop classes that fill companies' educational needs.

STUDENT SUCCESS GOALS:

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- The Colorado Legislature appropriated \$2,725,022 for the Colorado First and Existing Industry (CFEI) programs this FY 2010. These funds will be administered jointly by the Colorado Community College System and the Office of Economic Development. Community colleges act as liaisons working with companies in their areas to write proposals for needed customized training that will assist Colorado workers in keeping their jobs during the economic downturn.
- The Colorado First (CF) grant proposal deadlines for **FY2010** are the first working day of each month beginning in September and the Existing Industry (EI) deadlines are August 14th and October 30th. Colleges with approved grants were notified for CF Period 1, 2 and 3 as well as EI Period 1. Existing Industry Period 2 grant applications will be reviewed and approved following OED approval of their submitted financials. Colleges then notify the respective companies and training can begin. Approved grant funds are disbursed/transferred to participating colleges.

COLORADO SUCCESS UNLIMITED (SUN) INITIATIVE

The Colorado Success UNlimited project is a drop-out recovery initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education's *Ready for College* grant. The CCCS Foundation is partnering with the Colorado Department of Education's Adult Education division to develop, implement, and evaluate innovative strategies to transition GED completers and academically under-prepared out-of-school youth and adult learners into community colleges. This holistic approach addresses the cognitive, affective, and systemic challenges that impede learner success and negatively influence transition to post-secondary education through the implementation of the following strategies:

- Delivering intensive academic skill enhancement programs;
- Developing strong cohorts and learning communities in every program;
- Instilling on-going personal, academic, and career goal-setting practices;
- Integrating career assessment, exploration, and planning into the curriculum;
- Developing recruitment, motivation, and retention practices for high-risk populations;
- Providing daily, one-on-one student support services that mitigate attendance and enrollment barriers and strengthen the college transition process;
- Bridging academic gaps through innovative instructional methods in developmental and remedial education; and
- Building effective relationships between adult education centers and community colleges.

Colorado SUN's holistic college transition approach supports the following CCCS strategic planning goals:

STUDENT ACCESS GOAL:

All Coloradans shall have access to comprehensive community college educational programs.

- Partnering with the Colorado Department of Education's Adult Education Division in this project is providing a unique opportunity to build relationships between Colorado's adult education centers and community colleges. These relationships are resulting in the ability to expand recruiting strategies that effectively transition out-of-school youth and adult learners into community colleges, thereby increasing enrollment among the dropout population in the state.

To date, 11 student cohorts have participated in the College Connection skill enhancement program, and two additional cohorts have been added this fall at Southwest Colorado Community College, in conjunction with The Durango Adult Education Center, and Front Range Community College with the Center for Adult Learning. Successful students will complete the intensives in mid-December and transition into community colleges in the spring 2010 semester. A final cohort is currently being planned for the spring semester at Southwest Colorado Community College in conjunction with The Durango Adult Education Center.

STUDENT SUCCESS GOALS:

The demands of Colorado businesses and communities shall be met through the development of a high skilled work force.

- Research indicates that there are more than one million adults in Colorado without any higher education. Over 300,000 adults have not completed high school.

The Colorado SUN initiative offers hope for this population to obtain family-sustaining employment. The intensive skill enhancement programs, which fully integrate academic and career goal-setting strategies and career assessment, exploration, and planning into the curriculum, support Governor Ritter's plan to increase the number of degrees and certificates by 50% and locally develop a skilled workforce. Students are expected to complete assignments covering personal career identification, career research, resume writing, interviewing techniques, and career pathway development. Preliminary evaluation results indicate that students have highly benefited from these practices as they provide direction for their futures and instill confidence in career planning.

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- Providing a critical safety net to high risk populations, Colorado SUN Navigators are staffed at each site to provide essential support services to transitioning students. Navigators recruit students, address their personal and academic barriers, escort them through the financial aid and enrollment process, lead career exploration efforts, provide daily 1:1 case management, and support with college persistence.
- Instructors in each intensive skill enhancement program are developing innovative strategies that help students advance faster into college-level coursework than traditional methods, thereby saving students time and money and increasing motivation. Key to academic success is the emphasis on critical thinking skills and contextualized curriculum.

Preliminary analysis of the program indicates that 78% of College Connection participants completed the program; 31% of completers gained 1 or more levels in developmental reading; 72% of completers advanced 2 or more levels in developmental math; and 85% of College Connection participants enrolled in community college upon completion of the program. A final evaluation will be available in August 2010.

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- Selected as one of only 4 states (out of 47) to participate in the nationally recognized *Ready for College* grant, Colorado's successful, innovative college transition strategies and management models will be disseminated by the U.S. Department of Education upon closure of the grant. Data collection is central to the Colorado SUN project, and

preliminary evaluation results, both quantitative and qualitative, indicate success with SUN's holistic approach to transitioning students. Supporting these innovative strategies, grant activities have included:

- Implementation of intensive skill enhancement programs at seven adult education and community college sites at CCD, NJC, LCC, SCCC, RRCC, MCC and FRCC
- Staffing Navigators at each site to recruit students, address their personal and academic barriers, escort them through the financial aid and enrollment process, lead career exploration efforts, provide daily 1:1 case management, and support with college persistence
- Several statewide staff meetings to identify challenges, successes, and recommendations and plan future programs
- Professional development opportunities related to infusion of critical thinking skills into existing curricula, implementation of contextualized, interactive learning for both GED, and design of intensive developmental education programs
- Development of a core planning committee to identify: members for the statewide leadership team and their roles; policy and resource development issues related to transitioning adult education students into post-secondary education; and strategies to address these issues
- External evaluation to measure student success and document instruction practices and management processes
- Development of a "Navigator Manual" as a tool for new programs
- Creation of the Colorado SUN web site as a resource for existing and new programs in Colorado and other states

The evaluation process is on-going throughout the project. Fall activities have included site visits to Southwest Colorado Community College and Frontrange Community College, where both sites are in session, and additional work around data collection in conjunction with the CCCS Institutional Research office.

Owing to the noted preliminary success of the SUN initiative, the management team was invited to present the project at the high profile "National College Transition Network" (NCTN) conference in November. The presentation was extremely well attended and participants (from approximately 27 states) expressed high enthusiasm and interest in the model.

Professional development, a requirement of the SUN project, continued in the fall with opportunity for 1 participant from each community college to attend the NCTN conference. Participants came away with additional ideas around college readiness and transition strategies to apply to their local programs.

The Colorado SUN web site continues to grow with additional resources added, particularly related to transition math curriculum/pedagogy and navigator tools for understanding the role of the position, student outreach, financial aid, motivation and retention, academic advising, career exploration and planning, etc. This web site will continue to grow to provide Colorado with a strong local and national resource for college readiness and transition.

OFFICE OF VETERANS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Colorado Community College System Colorado Office of Veterans Education and Training (COVET) is the designated State Approving Agency for the purposes of approving and monitoring educational programs throughout the State of Colorado so that Colorado veterans and eligible persons may use their education benefits. These programs include Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) programs, Non-college Degree (NCD) programs, on-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeship programs (APP), and licensing and certification (LACAS) programs that are based in Colorado. COVET provides in-depth technical assistance, outreach and consultation with all related organizations, agencies and individuals. The staff complete initial and revised approvals; visit the facilities for supervision, inspection, etc; provide technical assistance to the certifying officials of the schools; complete outreach and liaison activities; and manage the contract between CCCS and the Department of Veterans Affairs. COVET meets specific strategic planning goals in the following ways:

STUDENT ACCESS GOAL:

All Coloradans shall have access to comprehensive community college educational programs.

- The Office of Veterans Education and Training monitors education and training programs to ensure approval is current and correct according to VA regulations so that veterans have access to the programs when they need them.
- The Office of Veterans Education and Training conducts outreach programs to veterans and the community to promote use of the GI Bill benefits program at Colorado Community Colleges. This outreach effort is through brochures and at various meetings.

STUDENT SUCCESS GOAL:

The demands of Colorado businesses and communities shall be met through the development of a high skilled workforce.

- The Office of Veterans Education and Training coordinates cooperative efforts with the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Apprenticeship, and Colorado Department of Labor and Employment to increase the number of On-the-Job-Training (OJT) and Apprenticeship opportunities available to veterans. We also explore opportunities provided by the community college educational programs to assist in providing the necessary related instruction required with OJT/Apprenticeship programs. Our office works with Law Enforcement agencies in establishing OJT opportunities to veterans. One example program that benefits the veterans, community colleges and Colorado communities is with the Aurora Police Department where recruits are graduates of the Community College of Aurora, hired by Aurora PD, attend Aurora PD's Academy (which is approved for credit by CCA) and complete a field training program upon

completion of the academy. A veteran is provided the opportunity to use his/her GI Bill benefits at CCA, and at Aurora PD through their OJT program.