



Data Reporting Overview

This document provides an overview and listing of the data that will be collected as part of your college's Pathways work. Outlined below is a description of:

1. The key performance indicators (KPIs) that Pathways colleges will report on to establish a baseline and then monitor student progress as work proceeds on designing and implementing pathways at scale.
2. The Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA) student progress and outcomes (SPOs) metrics, which will be used to determine how well students are doing at progressing through to milestones and reaching outcomes.

Data submission will recur annually throughout the Project and begins with baseline reporting as advance work for the first Pathways Institute. AACC, through its VFA data system, will manage the data submission process for the Pathways colleges.

Overview

Each college participating in the AACC Pathways Project will collect and report data on student outcomes using a selected set of key performance indicators (KPIs) and VFA student progress and outcomes (SPOs) measures. These KPIs and SPOs will enable each college and the national Pathways partner organizations to determine whether student outcomes are improving at a given institution.

Furthermore, based on reports by the colleges about the changes in practice they are implementing, project researchers will be able to assess whether any changes in KPIs could be the result of such reforms.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Partners and colleges will focus on KPIs that can be measured in one year or less and yet that research indicates are correlated with a greater likelihood of timely completion. Specifically, colleges will report data on trends in the following KPIs. (Supporting research for each is indicated in endnotes.)

1. Early momentum KPIs:
 - a. Earned 6+ college credits in 1st term
 - b. Earned 12+ college credits in 1st term
 - c. Earned 15+ college credits in year 1
 - d. Earned 24+ college credits in year 1

- e. Earned 30+ college credits in year 1
- 2. Gateway math and English completion KPIs:ⁱⁱ
 - a. Completed college math in year 1
 - b. Completed college English in year 1
 - c. Completed college math and English in year 1
- 3. Persistence KPIs:ⁱⁱⁱ
 - a. Persisted from term 1 to term 2
- 4. College course completion KPI:^{iv}
 - a. College-level course completion rate in students' first academic year

Student Progress & Outcomes (SPOs) Measures

- 1. Developmental education progress measures (subjects: math, English, reading)
 - a. Distribution of developmental need (1, 2, or 3 levels below college level in subject)
 - b. Attempted developmental education course in subject
 - c. Became college-ready in subject
 - d. Completed a college-level course in subject

Any developmental

- a. Enrolled in any developmental course
- b. Completed all developmental education (and are college-ready)
- 2. Two-year progress measures
 - a. Retention: fall to next term
 - b. Successful completion of credits: 1st term; by end of year two
 - c. Zero credits earned first term
 - d. Reached credit threshold by end of year two
 - e. Persistence/attainment: completed certificate/degree; transferred; still enrolled
- 3. Six-Year outcomes measures (unduplicated; hierarchical)
 - a. Completed certificate, associate, or bachelor's degree (with/without transfer)
 - b. Transfer (no award)
 - c. Persistence: still enrolled
 - d. Left with ≥ 30 credits; left with < 30 credits

Cohorts

For the KPIs: Each college will be asked to identify and report on cohorts of students who enrolled in higher education for the first time ever at your college ("FTEIC students") in the fall terms of each of six "baseline" years prior to and including the first year the college participates in the Pathways Institutes, and for each of the two remaining years of the project (fall 2011 through spring 2019). While it is true that many, if not most, students served by project colleges have prior college experience, some project analysis will focus on the first-time ever college student cohorts because project researchers believe that looking at outcomes

for students who begin at the same “starting line” is a way to understand a college’s effects on student outcomes.

To complement the Pathways FTEIC cohort, the VFA system will use the data submitted to calculate two additional cohorts of students:

1. Main Cohort – all fall-entering students, including those with prior college experience
2. Credential Seeking Cohort – student’s whose course-taking behavior suggests they are seeking a credential

The FTEIC, Main, and Credential Seeking cohorts will also be disaggregated by a limited number of student demographics to allow researchers to see if any changes in outcomes might be due to changes over time in cohort composition.

The cohorts will be disaggregated by: gender; race/ethnicity; age; Pell status; college-ready/not college-ready; and full-time/part-time status.

Data on the near-term KPIs will allow partners and colleges to get at least a high-level sense of whether a college is improving performance without having to wait a long time for the results. If colleges are successful in increasing rates of student progression on these near-term measures that research suggests are correlated with longer-term degree completion, it is reasonable to expect to see improvements in student success rates over time, for which having the student progress and outcomes measures will be useful.

More Information on Cohorts and Tracking Periods

Cohorts (Fall)

1. Main Cohort: The VFA Main Cohort consists of students who enrolled in at least one credit course (including developmental, but excluding non-credit offerings) in the fall of a given year.
2. FTEIC Cohort: The first-time-ever-in-college (FTEIC) cohort consists of students in the VFA Main Cohort (above) with no prior postsecondary enrollment based on a scan of enrollment in prior terms using National Student Clearinghouse data and further excluding any student who transferred in any college credits when they enrolled in the college. Students who entered the college through dual high school–college enrollment programs or completed Advanced Placement courses should be excluded because the outcomes for these students tend to be different than for those who had not completed college-level coursework.
3. Credential Seeking Cohort: The VFA Credential Seeking Cohort consists of students in the VFA Main Cohort (above) who have earned 12 or more credits (including developmental, but excluding non-credit offerings) within the first two years at the college. This cohort is automatically calculated by the VFA system, and will not apply to the 2015-16 baseline data.

Tracking Periods

As an advance-work assignment for the first Pathways Institute, colleges will be reporting the KPIs and SPOs data on the Fall Cohorts (Main, FTEIC, Credential Seeking) starting with the fall 2010 and going through the summer 2016 (2010-11; 2011-12; 2012-13; 2013-14; 2014-15; 2015-16). The KPIs will be calculated based on outcomes for these students after the first term and after the first year, which includes fall, spring, and summer terms. The SPOs will be calculated based on outcomes for these students after year two and year six, which includes fall, spring, and summer terms.

ENDNOTES

ⁱ On early credit accumulation as a correlate to student completion, see Paul Attewell, Scott Heil, & Liza Reisel, What Is Academic Momentum? And Does It Matter? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 34(1), 27-44, 2012. On the correlation between early entry into a program of study and completion or transfer, see: Davis Jenkins and Sun-Woo Cho, Get With the Program...And Finish It: Building Guided Pathways to Accelerate Student Learning And Success. In B.C. Phillips, & J.E. Horowitz, Eds., *New Directions for Community Colleges*. (Special Issue: The College Completion Agenda: Practical Approaches for Reaching the Big Goal.) San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. 2013(164): 27-35.

ⁱⁱ On the correlation between completing college-level math and English and degree completion, see Juan Carlos Calcagno, Peter Crosta, Thomas R. Bailey, & Davis Jenkins.. Does Age of Entrance Affect Community College Completion Probabilities? Evidence from a Discrete-Time Hazard Model. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. 22(3) (September), 2007. <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/age-of-entrance-completion-probabilities.html>.

ⁱⁱⁱ On the importance for completion of enrollment continuity, see Peter M. Crosta, Intensity and Attachment: How the Chaotic Enrollment Patterns of Community College Students Affect Educational Outcomes, *Community College Review*, 42(2) (April 2014) 118-142.

^{iv} On the correlation between course completion rates and completion, see Matthew Zeidenberg, Davis Jenkins, & Marc Scott, Not Just Math and English: Courses That Pose Obstacles to Community College Completion. (CCRC Working Paper No. 52). New York: Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University (November), 2012.