National Trends for UHCC: Guided Pathways & Beyond Financial Aid

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November 2015
Agenda

1. Guided Pathways Redux


3. Beyond Financial Aid
Guided Pathways
Quick Review
Unfulfilled Expectations

- ~1.5 million new cc students per year
- 80% intend to earn a bachelor’s
- 20% of transfers earn AA before transfer
- 25% transfer to 4-year in 5 yrs
- 17% earn BA 6 yrs after transfer

Source: NCES and NSC.
Cafeteria College

- Paths to student end goals unclear
- Limited upfront career / academic exploration
- Intake process diverts students
- Students’ progress not monitored
- Learning outcomes not clearly defined and assessed across programs
Guided Pathways College

- Clear roadmaps to student end goals
- Intake redesigned as an on-ramp to POS
- Students’ progress tracked, with frequent feedback and support as needed
- Learning outcomes and assessments aligned across each program
Supporting Evidence

Pathway analysis
- Chaotic student enrollment patterns
- Pathways misaligned, lots of roadblocks
- Students say they are confused

Organizational performance
- Big improvements require systemic change
- Align organizational practices to end goals
- Broad engagement critical to success

Behavioral psychology/economics
- Maps
- Defaults + “Active choice”
- Feedback, Reminders
More Supporting Evidence

Research on teaching and learning
- Instructional program coherence
- Contextualization
- Importance of feedback

Targeted research
- CUNY ASAP (MDRC)
- Acceleration (CCBC ALP)
- Alternative math pathways (Mathway, etc.)
- Contextualization (I-BEST)
## Guided Pathways at Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Community Colleges</th>
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<tr>
<td>Florida State</td>
<td>Queensborough (CUNY)</td>
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<td>Univ. of Central Florida</td>
<td>Santa Fe College (FL)</td>
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<td>Georgia State</td>
<td>Guttman College (CUNY)</td>
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<td>Arizona State</td>
<td>City Colleges of Chicago</td>
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<td>TN State Universities</td>
<td>TN community colleges</td>
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<td>Florida International U.</td>
<td>Miami Dade College</td>
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<td>Indian River CC</td>
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New CC Business Model

- Focus on programs, not courses
- Ensure programs lead to student goals
- Recruit students into programs
- Monitor/support progress toward program completion
- Build regional “talent supply chains” in fields of economic importance
New Students Want to Know:

- What are my career options?
- What are the education paths to those careers?
- What will I need to take?
- How long will it take and how much will it cost?
- How much financial aid can I get?
- Will my credits transfer?
Four Big Ideas for Redesign

1. Mapping Paths to Student End Goals
2. Helping Students Get on a Path
3. Keeping Students on a Path
4. Ensuring that Students are Learning

*Based on the work of Davis Jenkins & Rob Johnstone
Demystifying Guided Pathways:
Exploring Ten Commonly Asked Questions about Implementing Pathways
Demystifying Guided Pathways Paper

• Released November 2015 by NCII

• Companion to excellent CCRC Book

• Available at http://www.inquiry2improvement.com/publications-resources

• Designed to address questions NCII, CCRC, JFF, and Public Agenda have heard in hundreds of guided pathways sessions with faculty, student services professionals and administrators

• Not the defining word – just food for thought!
Top 10 FAQs - Redesigning for Completion

Q1 - Isn’t college a meritocracy, where the strong / smart succeed, and the weak / underprepared / unmotivated don’t succeed?

• Model of higher education relatively unchanged

• Income quartile and college graduation rates of similarly high-achieving students

• Haven’t tested the limits of potential changes such as guided pathways – CUNY, Georgia State data
Top 10 FAQs - Redesigning for Completion

Q2 – Isn’t “free choice” the cornerstone of American higher education?

- Behavioral economics and social psychology research on number of choices and rationality
- Existence of degree audit programs
- Choice architecture / career interest areas – Queensborough, City College Chicago, ASU, Lorain
- Picking courses vs. picking programs
Top 10 FAQs - Redesigning for Completion

Q3 – Won’t we sacrifice quality when we move to guided pathways?

• Foothill’s Four C’s as a model for GE / liberal arts outcomes
• Assessment paradigms challenged to establish current quality
• Employer feedback surveys suggest issues exist
• 10 to 14 GE courses under both models
• Random assignment of GE package vs. “fit”
Top 10 FAQs - Redesigning for Completion

Q4 – Won’t we lose the heart of a liberal arts education when we make students’ journeys more structured?

• Argument that liberal arts outcomes more imp. now

• 10 to 14 GE Courses break down into areas – business, natural science, humanities, social sciences, mathematics, English

• Same number of humanities (or any other area) under guided pathways vs. cafeteria model

• Program faculty identify GE electives for best alignment for students in their programs
Q5 – Won’t faculty lose control over what is taught in their discipline?

• Faculty control already shifting with transfer pathways and articulation agreements

• Ownership over what is taught in programs vs. individual courses

• Faculty teaching preferences vs. ensuring courses will be applicable / keep students on path
Q6 – Won’t we lose enrollment at our college if we decrease swirl with increased structure or by making things mandatory?

- CC enrollments largely down since 2011-12
- No drops at MDC, GTCC & others implementing guided pathways / mandatory features
- Changes can only be opposed by current students
- Potential to increase units / student significantly
Top 10 FAQs - Redesigning for Completion

Q7 – Isn’t all of this “hand-holding” going to create graduates that can’t navigate the workplace / real world?

• Value of systems that those who work in higher education have trouble navigating

• Complexity dissuades students – especially students of color / first time in college students – that data shows us could succeed under right conditions

• Potential to exacerbate race, class and income equality – issues of social capital
Top 10 FAQs - Redesigning for Completion

Q8 – Don’t students benefit when they “find themselves” by what looks like wandering to an observer?

• Most students don’t want to wander – research studies by RP (CA), Public Agenda (IN), and CBD

• Works for some who can afford to – not as often for low-income students and FTIC

• Taking courses as way of finding oneself inefficient

• Those who “found themselves” tend to be us
Top 10 FAQs - Redesigning for Completion

Q9 – How can students be expected to make career decisions at age 18? and Q10 – Don’t students change careers 4 to 7 times – why then guided pathways?

• Common coursework leading into multiple options

• GP provides more clarity on career selection

• GP can focus attention on GE skills that will help students navigate careers and career changes

• Most importantly, let’s get students into and prepared for careers vs. dropping out and taking jobs by getting them to complete / transfer at higher rates
Conclusion

• Guided pathways can be a strong lever for helping more students complete college and enter the workforce and achieve family security, personal growth and professional advancement.

• Excitement about the next five years

• Can envision a future where this movement transforms our system of higher education improving hundreds of thousands of lives
Beyond Financial Aid
Guiding Principles

• A large and growing number of postsecondary students face the challenges created by limited resources. In fact, approximately **one in three American undergraduates receives a Pell grant** and is therefore considered a low-income student.

• When institutions structure and offer **all types** of financial aid (including “**nontraditional**” supports) in a coherent, consumable way, students will **persist longer**, **generate additional revenue** for the institution, and **graduate** at higher rates.

• Providing these supports in an intentional way is **not an impossible dream**; rather, **institutions** across the country **are doing it and doing it well**.
Moving Student Supports “Beyond Financial Aid”

- Expanding the definition of “financial supports” beyond grants, scholarships and loans
- Includes access to reliable and adequate nutrition, transportation, housing, and childcare as well as financial, tax, and legal services
- Additionally, institutions can and should review and revise their own pricing structures, financial aid strategies, and scholarship policies
BEYOND FINANCIAL AID: How Colleges Can Strengthen the Financial Stability of Low-Income Students and Increase Student Outcomes

Authors: National Center for Inquiry & Improvement (Priyadarshini Chaplot, Darla Cooper, Kelley Karandjeff and Robert Johnstone)

• A Primer on Strengthening Supports for Low-Income Students
  • Part 1: Making the Case for Improved Supports for Low-Income Students
  • Part 2: Exploring the “Six Strategies” for Supporting Low-Income Students

• The BFA Self-assessment Guide
  • Part 3: Assessing Your Institution’s Support for Low-Income Students
  • Part 4: Interpreting Your Self-Assessment Results and Strengthening Supports for Low-Income Students
The Impact is Real, and Severe

Graduation Rates by Family Income and Test Scores
Institutions that Support Low-Income Students Are Better Able to:

1. Improve key indicators of institutional performance, such as higher retention, completion, transfer, and employment rates
2. Address calls for accountability by accrediting agencies, state educational systems, and the public to ensure quality and affordable access for all students
3. Create economic benefits to the institution, such as increased revenue from tuition and state apportionment
4. Narrow the “achievement gap,” which may be less about the “achievement” and more about having the resources to succeed
5. Strengthen commitment to and relationships within the community
THE SIX STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS
Six Strategies for Expanding Support for Low-Income Students

1. Know the low-income students at your institution
2. Provide supports to help low-income students overcome practical barriers
3. Leverage external partnerships for service delivery
4. Empower low-income students to utilize available resources
5. Review your internal processes
6. Implement effective practices to strengthen the academic progression of all students
Strategy 1: Know the Low-Income Students at Your Institution

• Each institution varies in its makeup of low-income students as well as their unmet needs and existing supports.

• Use institutional data to learn more:
  • How many of your students are economically disadvantaged?
  • What are their levels of unmet need?
  • What are the rates at which they progress and succeed?
  • What is their experience at the institution?

• **Example:** Georgia State University’s Panther Retention Grants
Strategy 2: Provide Supports that Help Low-Income Students Overcome Practical Barriers

- Financial support system can include
  - easy access and enrollment into public benefits such as nutrition and health care
  - provision of financial and career coaching
  - implementation of on-campus programs to offer services such as automotive repair, tax programs, and legal services
- Bundling, integrating, and centralizing these services
- **Example**: Arkansas’ Career Pathways Initiative
Strategy 3: Leverage External Partnerships for Service Delivery on Campus

- Strengthen community partnerships with organizations that have shared missions, values, and students
  - Workforce and government benefits agencies
  - Community- and faith-based organizations
  - Organizations offering legal support, tax coaching and preparation
  - Corporate partners interested in regional community development
- Consider ways to bring services directly to the students
- **Example**: Central New Mexico Community College’s partnership with United Way (part of CNM Connect)
Strategy 4: Empower Low-Income Students to Utilize Available Resources

- Many students do not proactively seek out these services
- Shift the default from an “opt-in” model to an “opt-out” model
  - Mandatory financial literacy classes
- Normalize the act of accessing financial supports
- **Example**: Integrated Public Benefits Screening Process
Strategy 5: Review Your Internal Processes

- What was once a convenient policy or a reasonable process may now have unintended impacts, especially on low-income students.
- Review, update, reorganize, and streamline internal processes that can ease the ability and speed of students to access services, enroll in courses, and complete educational goals.
- Flowchart the experience of low-income students.
- **Example:** Skyline College’s Comprehensive Diversity Framework (California)
Strategy 6: Implement Effective Practices to Strengthen the Academic Progression of All Students

• Practices include:
  • Helping incoming students identify educational and career interests and develop educational plans
  • Offering structured pathways, programs of study, and courses that lead to success
  • Implementing mechanisms to monitor student progress
  • Educating students of the costs of programs
  • Supporting graduates in transitioning to employment

• While these practices support all students, they can make larger differences for low-income students
USING THE BEYOND FINANCIAL AID SELF-ASSESSMENT
Using BFA’s Self-assessment Guide

• **Goal**: Discover opportunities to evaluate, enhance and expand financial supports for low-income students

• **Step 1**: Identify a core cross-functional campus team whose members:
  - Represent various aspects of the student experience
  - Have direct knowledge, data and/or oversight in the campus activities covered by the Six Strategies
Using BFA’s Self-assessment Guide

• **Step 2:** With your core team, take the self-assessment to explore the strength, integration and effectiveness of your institution’s current efforts in each of the six strategies
  - Each of the self-assessment’s six sections corresponds one of the six strategies and contains a set of relevant items
  - The general rating scale is:
    - A = We do it a lot.
    - B = We have done it but, not regularly.
    - C = We rarely do it or don’t do it at all.

• **Step 3:** Document whether your core team mostly answered A, B or C for each section.
Using BFA’s Interpretation Guide

- **Step 4**: With your core team, use the interpretation guide to make sense of the results in terms of:
  - Your institution’s current composition and the circumstances facing low-income students
  - Opportunities for partnerships inside and outside of the institution
  - How to start a dialogue and develop a plan of action for strengthening support for low-income students at your institution
What’s Next for BFA?

• Gathering feedback and examples from the field through summer of 2016
• Providing targeted technical assistance starting in fall 2015 through 2016
• Releasing a revised BFA in fall 2016
BFA E-Mail: bfa@luminafoundation.org

Please e-mail us with your:
• Questions
• Feedback
• Best Practices
• Success Stories

BFA on the Web: www.luminafoundation.org/bfa
Find Out More

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