



Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Definitions and Instructions for Data Submission

This document provides an overview and definitions of key performance indicators (KPIs) that Pathways Project Colleges will report on to establish a baseline and then monitor student progress as work proceeds on designing and implementing pathways at scale. This task will recur annually throughout the Project and begins with baseline reporting as advance work for the first Pathways Institute. The Community College Research Center (CCRC), a national partner in the AACC Pathways Project, is responsible for collecting KPI and essential practices assessment reports from each participating college and for synthesizing and analyzing trends across all of the colleges.

Pre-Institute Reporting Instructions

Please use the accompanying spreadsheet to calculate and report all of the KPIs described below for the fall FTEIC cohorts during the five full academic years prior to the start of the AACC Pathways Project —2010-11 through 2014-15. **Please submit the KPI report using the format indicated in the accompanying spreadsheet to Coral Noonan-Terry (noonan@cccse.org) at CCSSE by no later than January 15, 2016.** CCCSE will forward submitted data to Hana Lahr (lahr@tc.columbia.edu) of the Community College Research Center.

For information and assistance on data collection and submission, contact Hana Lahr of the Community College Research Center at lahr@tc.columbia.edu

Overview

Each college participating in the AACC Pathways Project has agreed to collect and report data on student outcomes using a selected set of key performance indicators, or KPIs. These KPIs will enable each college, the national partner organizations, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to determine whether student outcomes are improving at a given institution. 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. *Listed below are the KPIs colleges will be asked to report, along with definitions to use in calculating them.*

Given the relatively short timeframe of the project, 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.) Please see the section below, “KPIs Defined,” for descriptions of these indicators.

- 1) Early momentum KPIs:¹
 - 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:²
 - a) Completed college math in year 1
 - b) Completed college English in year 1
- 3) Persistence KPIs:³
 - a) Persisted from term 1 to term 2
- 4) College course completion KPI:⁴
 - a) College-level course completion rate in students' first academic year

Cohorts. Each college will be asked to calculate and report these measures using data on cohorts of *students who enrolled in higher education for the first time at your college ("FTEIC students") in the fall terms of each of six "baseline" years* prior to and including the first year the colleges participate in the Pathways Institutes and for each of the two remaining years of the project (fall 2010 through spring 2018). While it is true that many if not most students served by project colleges have prior college experience, data collection and analysis will focus on the first-time college student cohorts because project researchers believe that looking at outcomes for students who begin at the same "starting line" is the best way to understand a college's effects on student outcomes. Colleges also will report a limited number of student demographic statistics for each cohort to allow researchers to see if any changes in outcomes might be due to changes over time in cohort composition.

Data on these 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.

Still, given the descriptive nature of the data colleges will report, project researchers will not be able to attribute any changes in KPIs to reforms implemented by the colleges as a result of participating in the Pathways Institutes (or any other reforms, for that matter). However, it is feasible to assess whether the reforms colleges implement are of sufficient scale and scope to have *the potential* to effect improvements in KPIs. If colleges fail to implement reforms that could affect students at scale, or if they implement reforms that are unlikely to affect particular KPIs, then all parties should assume that any improvements in KPIs are not the result of such reforms. Conversely, if colleges implement large-scale changes that affect large numbers of students, then partners and colleges are in a stronger position to argue that improvements in KPIs could be related to such reforms.

To document the reforms implemented by the colleges, colleges will be asked in a separate assignment to report information on the nature, scale, and timing of guided pathways reforms for the baseline period prior to the project and at the end of each of the three years of the project. For this purpose, the project provides a reporting template designed to enable colleges to assess the scale at which essential guided pathways practices have been implemented (see "Guided Pathways Essential Practices: Scale of Adoption Assessment Tool").

Data Definitions

Fall cohorts

Colleges should calculate all KPIs using data on cohorts of first-time-ever-in-college (FTEIC) students who enrolled in at least one credit course (including developmental, but excluding non-credit offerings) in the fall of a given year. FTEIC students are those 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 should be excluded because the outcomes for these students tend to be different than for those who do not enter through dual enrollment.

Tracking periods

The KPIs to be calculated will be based on outcomes for these students after the first term and after the first year, which includes fall, spring and summer terms.

KPIs defined

As an advance-work assignment for the first Pathways Institute, please calculate and report on these measures for Fall Cohorts (FTEIC) beginning in fall 2010 through fall 2014.

| KPIs | Definition |
|--|--|
| <i>1) Early momentum</i> | |
| Earned 6+ college credits in 1 st term | Number and % of fall cohort students who earned 6 or more college-level (i.e., non-developmental) credits (with grade C- or better) in first term |
| Earned 12+ college credits in 1 st term | Number and % of fall cohort students who earned 12 or more college-level (i.e., non-developmental) credits (with grade C- or better) in first term |
| Earned 15+ college credits in year 1 | Number and % of fall cohort students who earned 15 or more college-level (i.e., non-developmental) credits (with grade C- or better) in first full academic year |
| Earned 24+ college credits in year 1 | Number and % of fall cohort students who earned 24 or more college-level (i.e., non-developmental) credits (with grade C- or better) in first full academic year |
| Earned 30+ college credits in year 1 | Number and % of fall cohort students who earned 30 or more college-level (i.e., non-developmental) credits (with grade C- or better) in first full academic year |

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|---|--|
| 2) Gateway math and English completion | |
| Completed college math in year 1 | Number and % of fall cohort students who attempted and passed at least one college level (i.e., non-developmental) math course (with grade C- or better) in the first full academic year. Withdrawals should be counted as attempting but not passing the course. |
| Completed college English in year 1 | Number and % of fall cohort students who attempted and passed at least one college level (i.e., non-developmental) English course (with grade C- or better) in the first full academic year. Withdrawals should be counted as attempting but not passing the course. |
| 3) Persistence | |
| Persisted from term 1 to term 2 | Number and % of fall cohort students who enrolled in at least one credit-bearing course (including remedial) in term 2 (spring term) |
| 4) College course completion | |
| Completed college credits | Number of college-level (i.e., non-remedial) credits earned (with grade C- or better) by fall cohort students in their first full academic year divided by the total number of college-level credits attempted by these students. <u>Withdrawals should be counted as attempted credits but not credits earned.</u> |

Student Demographic Indicators

| Demographic indicator | Definition |
|----------------------------------|--|
| College-ready | Number and % of fall cohort students who were referred to no developmental education |
| Referred to dev ed in 1 subject | Number and % of fall cohort students who were referred to developmental education in only 1 subject area (Math, writing, or reading) |
| Referred to dev ed in 2 subjects | Number and % of fall cohort students who were referred to developmental education in 2 subject areas (Math, writing, or reading) |
| Referred to dev ed in 3 subjects | Number and % of fall cohort students who were referred to developmental education in 3 subject areas (Math, writing, and reading) |
| Females | Number and % of fall cohort students who were female |
| Traditional college age | Number and % of fall cohort students who were 19 years of age or younger in their first term at the college |
| Full-time | Number and % of fall cohort students who were full-time (enrolled in at least 12 semester credit hours) in the first term |

REPRISE: Pre-Institute Reporting Instructions

Please use the attached spreadsheet to calculate and report all of the KPIs described above for the fall FTEIC cohorts during the five full academic years prior to the start of the AACCC Pathways Project —2010-11 through 2014-15. **Please submit the KPI report using the format indicated in the accompanying spreadsheet to Coral Noonan-Terry (noonan@cccse.org) at CCSSE by no later than January 15, 2016.** CCCSE will forward submitted data to Hana Lahr (lahr@tc.columbia.edu) of the Community College Research Center.

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ENDNOTES

¹ 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.

² 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>.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.