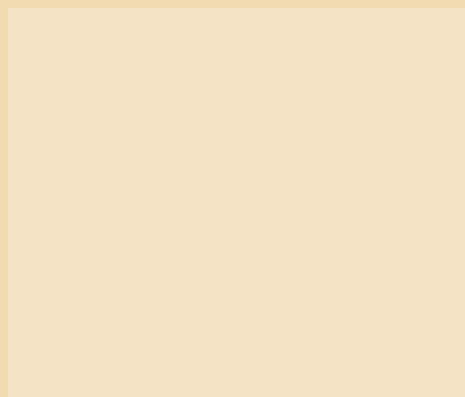
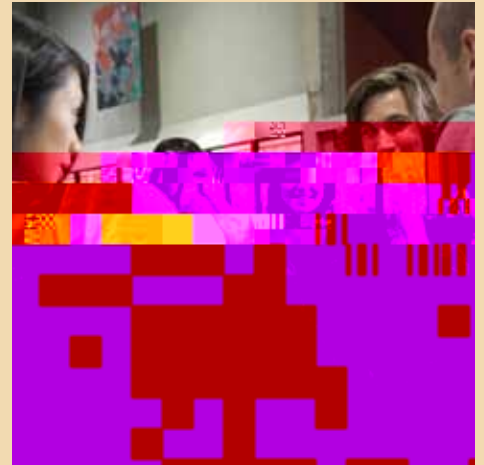


A Matter of Degrees



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- Q *Assessment and Placement*
- Q *Orientation*
- Q *Academic Goal Setting and Planning*
- Q *Registration before Classes Begin*

- Q *Accelerated or Fast-Track Developmental Education*
- Q *First-Year Experience*
- Q *Student Success Course*
- Q *Learning Community*

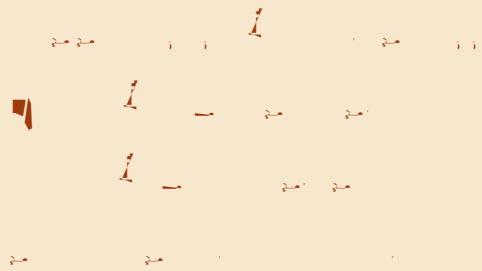
- Q *Class Attendance*
- Q *Alert and Intervention*
- Q *Experiential Learning beyond the Classroom*
- Q *Tutoring*
- Q *Supplemental Instruction*

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“Do not zero in on finding the silver bullet. There aren’t any. The effects of college are cumulative across a range of activities.”

— Patrick Terenzini
 Distinguished Professor and Senior Scientist, Emeritus
 Center for the Study of Higher Education
 The Pennsylvania State University

The Center's initiative on high-impact practices is a multiyear effort that draws on data from students, faculty members, and colleges. Findings from surveys and focus groups will be presented in a series of reports.

This report provides a first look at the data on promising practices. These are educational practices for which there is emerging evidence of success: research from the field and from multiple colleges with multiple semesters of data showing improvement on an array of metrics, such as course completion, retention, and graduation.

This first look describes the promising practices from four perspectives: entering students describing their earliest college experiences, students addressing their overall college experiences, faculty members providing their perceptions of student engagement, and colleges focusing on their use of the practices.

Colleges can use these initial findings as they examine their use of these promising practices. Moreover, while this first-look report addresses practices individually, looking at data across the practices highlights incongruities that colleges must address if they are to

improve outcomes. For example, 79% of entering students report that they plan to earn an associate degree, but just 45% of full-time students meet that goal within six years. Colleges can use these incongruities to focus discussions about what outcomes are most important and what policies and practices are most likely to result in those outcomes.

After additional data collection and analyses, the Center will report on high-impact practices for success and completion at community colleges. Subsequent reporting will aim to identify and define high-impact practices by examining the student, faculty, and institutional data about promising practices in relationship to overall levels of student engagement as well as student outcome data.

The Center's multiyear project uses input from students, faculty, and college leaders to explore the relative and combined value of 13 promising educational practices. The project builds on institutional work and a body of research about current practices and their results.

However, the effectiveness of any educational practice depends on its specific design and quality of implementation. At colleges across the country, the practices described in this report are implemented in a variety of ways and, as a result, their effectiveness can differ dramatically.

There is emerging consensus that certain design principles are critical for student success. No matter what program or practice a college implements, it is likely to have a greater impact if its design incorporates the following principles.

- Q Focusing attention on the front door of the college — ensuring that students' earliest contacts and first weeks incorporate experiences that will foster personal connections and enhance their chances of success — is a smart investment.
- Q The many choices and options students face as they endeavor to navigate through college systems can create unnecessary confusion — and inhibit students' success. Colleges can improve student success (and minimize ill-used time) by creating coherent pathways that help students move through an engaging collegiate experience.
- Q Time is a resource — one of the most important resources a college has — and it is finite. An effective college design incorporates time-efficient practices that help students succeed more quickly and with less stress.



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and that's why we're likely to see that in the
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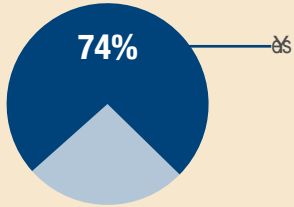
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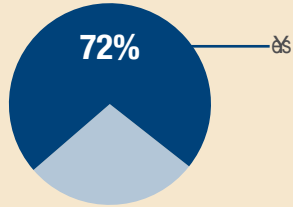




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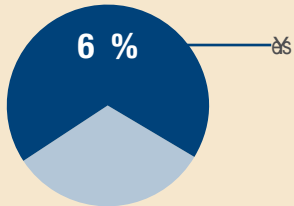


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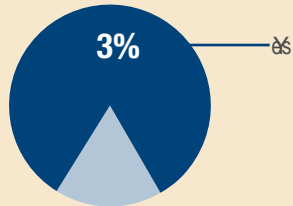


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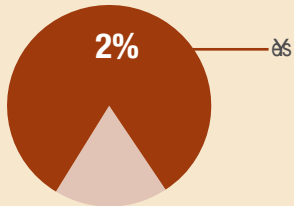
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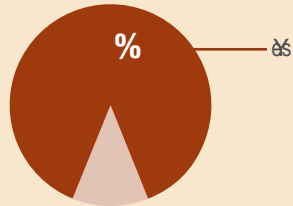
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“I have no idea why I got placed where I was.”
— Student

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How do you feel about the following statements?

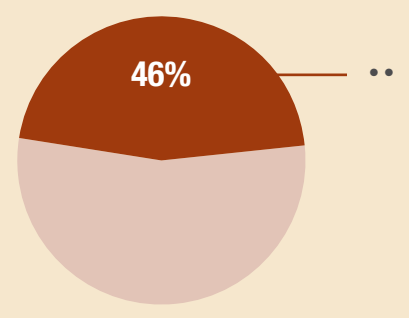
1. I am satisfied with the way the course is delivered

2. I am satisfied with the way the course is assessed

3. I am satisfied with the way the course is supported

4. I am satisfied with the way the course is organized

5. I am satisfied with the way the course is managed



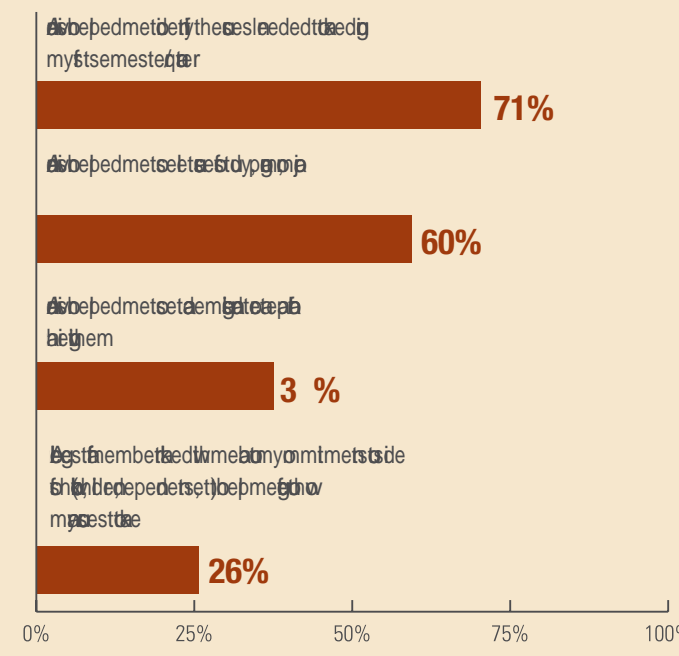
6. I am satisfied with the way the course is supported

7. I am satisfied with the way the course is organized

8. I am satisfied with the way the course is managed

9. I am satisfied with the way the course is delivered

10. I am satisfied with the way the course is assessed



How do you feel about the following statements?

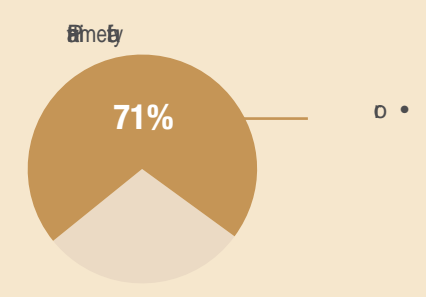
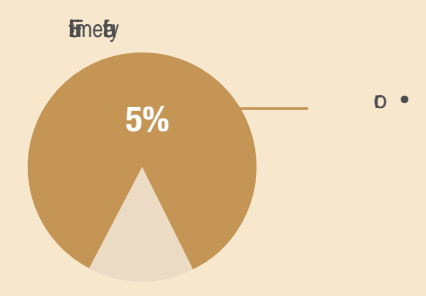
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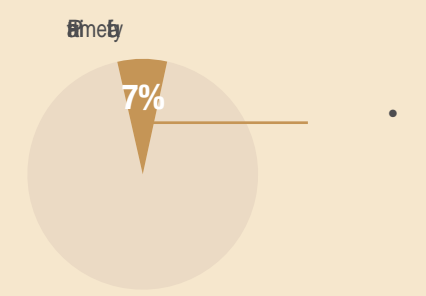
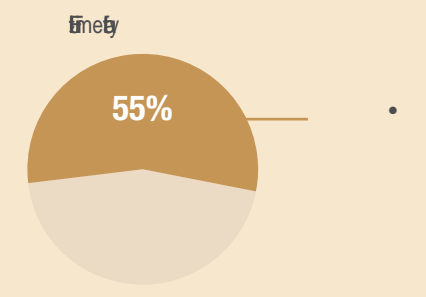
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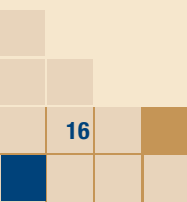
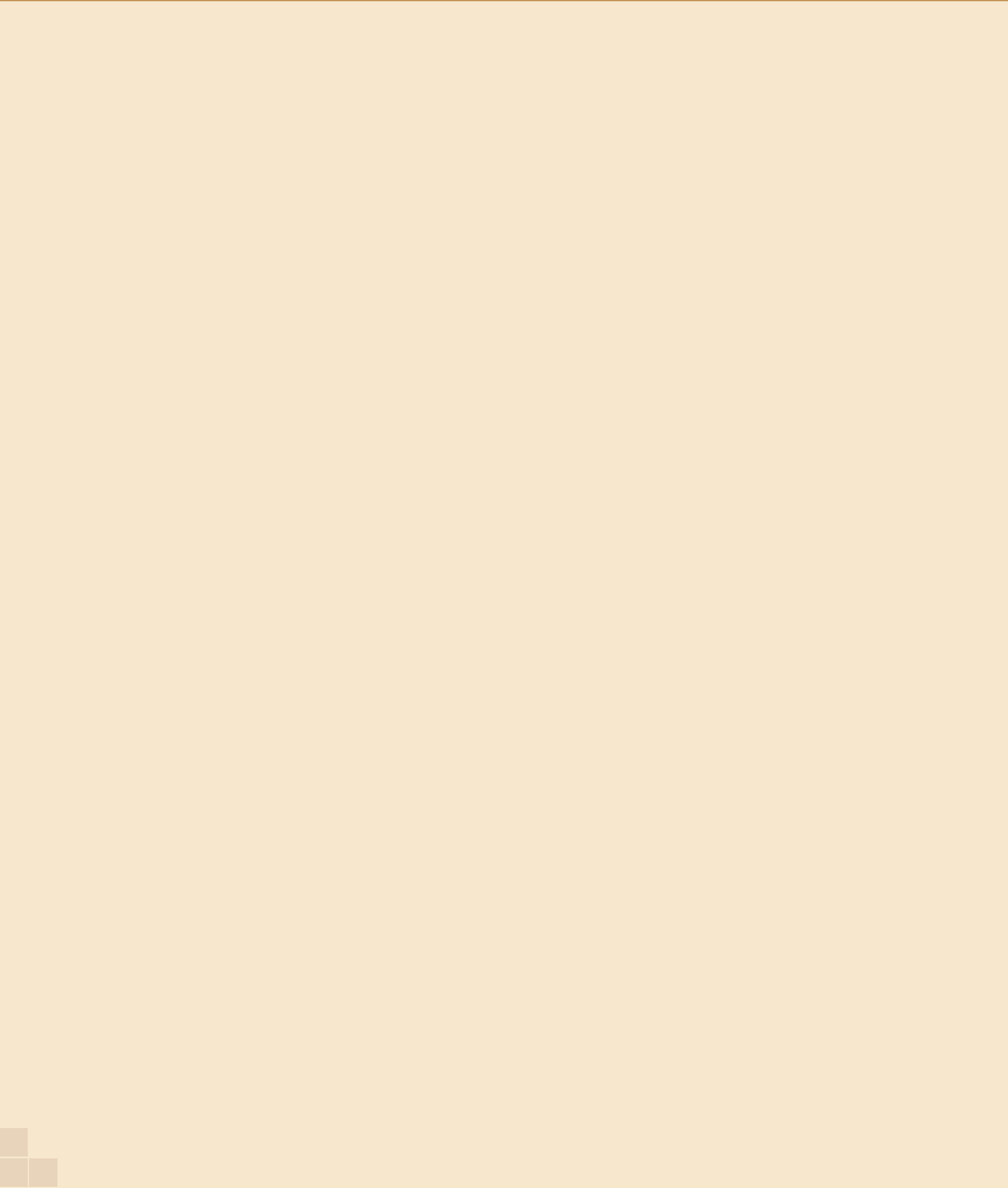


Student success courses help students build knowledge and skills essential for success in college, from study and time-management skills to awareness of campus facilities and support services. Research indicates that students who complete these courses are more likely to complete other courses, earn better grades, have higher overall GPAs, and obtain degrees.⁷

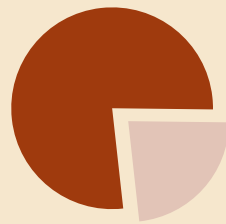
Of the 238 CCIS respondents that report having student success courses, 15% indicate that they require these courses for all first-time (full-time and part-time) students. The most prominently cited components of this practice are study skills, time-management skills, and note-taking skills.

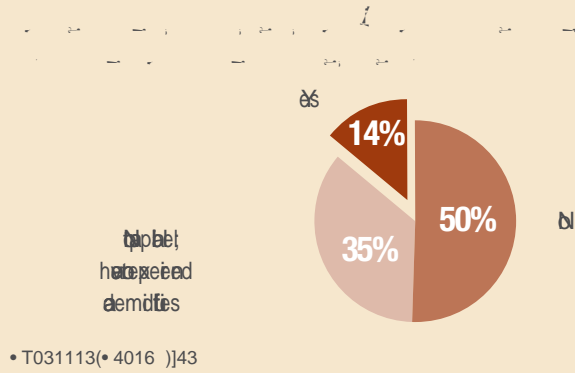
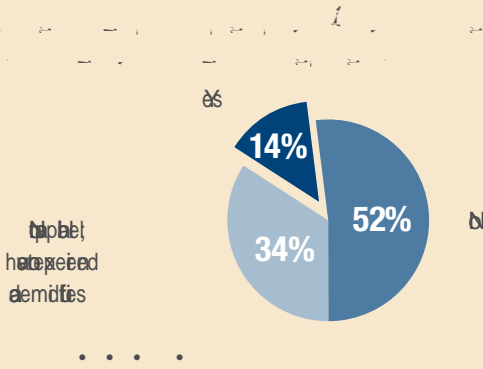
“Since I’ve never been to college before, I took the class with study skills, writing, and research. It’s everything built into one class. It’s helpful. It is.”

— Student









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“Anybody can come to [supplemental instruction]. You go over material that’s been discussed in class. I got to meet great people, and we formed our own study group to help even more. It really saved me big time.”

— *Student*

While tutoring usually is conducted one-on-one, supplemental instruction typically involves a regularly scheduled, supplemental

Many colleges are implementing one or more promising practices — and seeing dramatic gains in student retention and success.

Learning Frameworks

In fall 2007, **San Diego State University** began requiring all first-time-in-college students to take Learning Frameworks, a student success course that focuses on developing academic and personal skills, enhancing study skills, and helping students set goals. Students in the 2007–2009 cohorts who successfully completed the course had an average fall-to-spring retention rate of 89%, compared to a baseline of 66%; they successfully completed transitional reading at rates of 90% to 97%, compared to a baseline of 66%; and they successfully completed transitional writing at rates of 77% to 95%, compared to a baseline of 72%. In addition, 78% of Learning Frameworks students in the 2009 cohort successfully completed pre-algebra, compared to a baseline of 57%. Students who successfully completed Learning Frameworks, moreover, were more likely to succeed in developmental coursework, more likely to succeed in gatekeeper courses, more likely to be retained, and less likely to withdraw.

GPS LifePlan

The GPS LifePlan (Goals+Plans = Success) at **San Diego State University** helps students make intentional connections with the college and gives them tools for success. The GPS website has links to resources that help students develop goals and plans related to career, education, finance, leadership, and personal development, and it helps students maintain an eFolio (electronic portfolio) to track and reflect on activities completed.

GPS is integrated into the college curriculum through the college's New Student Seminar as well as developmental reading courses, learning communities, and other classes. More than 100 faculty members have incorporated GPS in more than 40 courses throughout the campus.

An independent evaluation of GPS found that first-time entering

In the same time period, FYE students' success rates in developmental English (two levels below college-level) increased from 57% in fall 2009 to 63% in fall 2010, as compared with an increase from 49% in fall 2009 to 59% in fall 2010 for all new students.

Retention rates for developmental English students participating in the FYE rose from 90% in fall 2009 to 92% in fall 2010, as compared with a steady 87% retention rate for non-FYE students.

In addition, pilot data on the college's innovative augmented instruction model indicate up to 20% improvement in course success rates and 10% improvement in retention rates for FYE students compared to the general new student population.

Providing College Success

In 2006, the college took multiple steps to improve its 69% first-to-second-semester retention rate. The college began to require all first-time-in-college students — full-time and part-time students with fewer than 12 successful college credit hours — to attend a pre-enrollment orientation and to enroll in a college success course. These two experiences help new students understand enrollment and other college processes, manage the college's online systems, develop skills, explore career choices, draft a specific degree-completion plan, connect with campus resources, and build relationships.

The college now has data for four cohorts (2007–2010), and persistence has improved each year. The 2007 cohort's first-to-second semester persistence rate was 73%. Nearly nine in 10 students in the 2010 cohort (89%) persisted into the second semester.

The college plans to continue these interventions and to add others, such as required placement testing preparation and automated registration to ensure correct course placement, to improve entering students' experiences.

Assessment

In fall 2008, the college launched a partnership with the Howard County Public School System to assess 11th graders and better prepare them for college. The program began with administering reading and writing placement tests for all 11th grade students, except those enrolled in honors, Advanced Placement, or gifted and talented courses. These students also met with their high school guidance counselors and the college's English faculty to discuss college readiness in conjunction with grades and overall high school performance.

After the testing, the county's public school system used the college's developmental curriculum to infuse developmental objectives into its classes. Thus, students who were not college ready (per their test scores) were given the opportunity to become ready during their senior year. High schools also added a senior-year writing project and an oral presentation to their curriculum.

Two years after the program began, students who went from the public school system to the college had an 80% fall-to-spring retention rate, as compared with 56% for all first-time freshmen. In addition, 40% placed into both college-level reading and

writing, as compared with 36% for all first-time freshmen, and 73% improved their scores, compared to results from the test they took in high school.

Improving Completion

After reviewing *CCSSE* and *SENSE* data and conducting student focus groups, the college determined that better student engagement was critical to improve completion rates in developmental education.

The college adopted a three-pronged approach that centered on redesigning courses, improving faculty development, and expanding student support services.

The college's specific strategies included (1) requiring a learning strategies course for all new students whose placement scores indicate a need for two or more areas or levels of remediation; (2) offering fast-track remedial courses in reading, writing, and math; (3) eliminating late registration so faculty can implement first-week engagement activities in their courses; (4) requiring orientation for all students new to the college; and (5) requiring financial aid orientation for all students eligible to receive federal assistance.

In addition, faculty participated in professional development including student success strategies workshops. Faculty, staff, and administrators participated in the Center's Entering Student Success Institutes in 2008 and 2011.

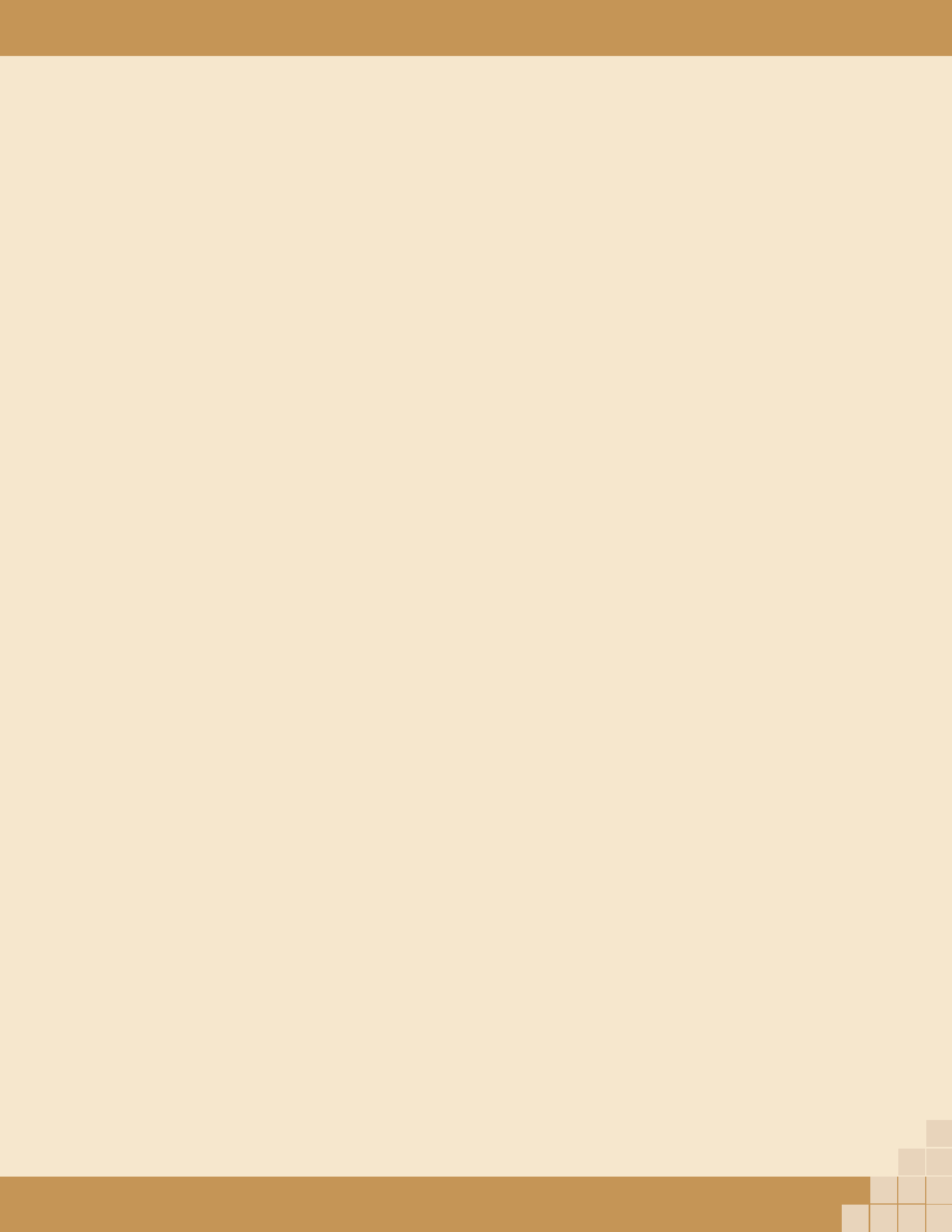
To improve student support, a counselor is dedicated to developmental education, and her office is located in the center of the building where

In fall 2008, the college piloted the new approach in the basic arithmetic course with 19 students, and 74% completed the course with a C or better, compared with just 45% of similar students in traditional developmental math. In spring and fall 2009, the college continued with one pilot class each semester at the basic arithmetic level, and students in these pilot classes had higher success rates than their peers. In spring 2009, 63% of students in the pilot passed with a C or higher compared with 34% of students in traditional developmental math. In fall 2009, 68% of pilot students succeeded, compared with 44% of their peers.

In spring and fall 2009, instead of placing all students with an Accuplacer score of 20–74 in the basic arithmetic class, the college decided to place students who had a score of 65–74 in the newly designed college-preparatory developmental math course. The new course combined basic arithmetic review with college-preparatory developmental math. The college recorded higher success rates for students in this class than for students in traditional college-preparatory developmental math.

Based on these promising results, MCCC trained additional faculty in the new approach and continued to make changes based on data. In spring 2010, the college enrolled half of all students placing in the basic arithmetic developmental math course in the redesigned classes.

In fall 2010, the college again expanded the scale of the developmental math program by further lowering the cut scores: All students scoring 55–74 on their math placement tests were placed in college-preparatory developmental math. Even with this lower cut score, students in the redesigned college-preparatory class had a 58% success rate (N=380), compared with a 40% success rate (N=284) for students in traditional developmental math. With these results, starting in fall 2011, all basic arithmetic classes began using the new approach, and all students scoring 65–74 on their math placement tests were placed in college-preparatory developmental math.



2011



ere were, in total, 336 colleges that responded to the CCIS in its first administration. These colleges are located in 45 states, plus the District of Columbia, three Canadian provinces, and the Bahamas.

The U.S. colleges come from all six accreditation regions, with a slight overrepresentation of colleges accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The CCIS colleges serve urban, suburban, and rural settings in the same proportions as all other community colleges nationally, though the colleges that responded tended to be large in their enrollment sizes. CCIS respondents are similar to other community colleges in terms of the proportion of colleges participating in Achieving the Dream and Completion by Design initiatives.

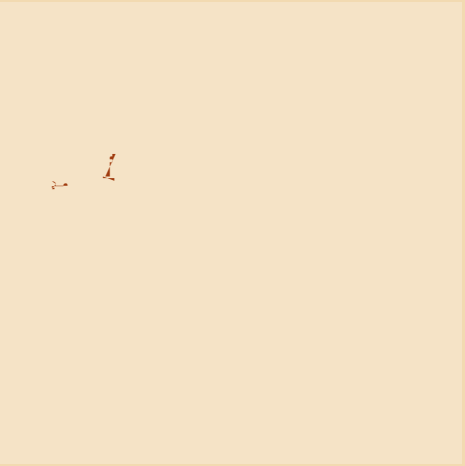
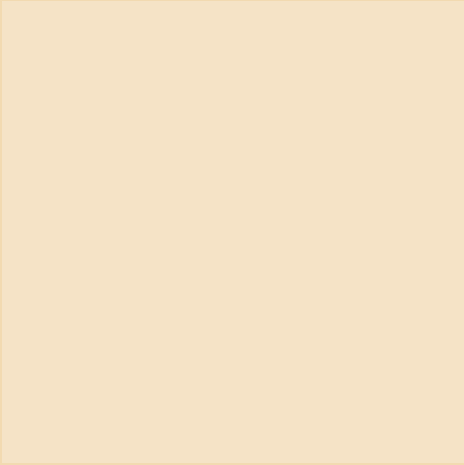
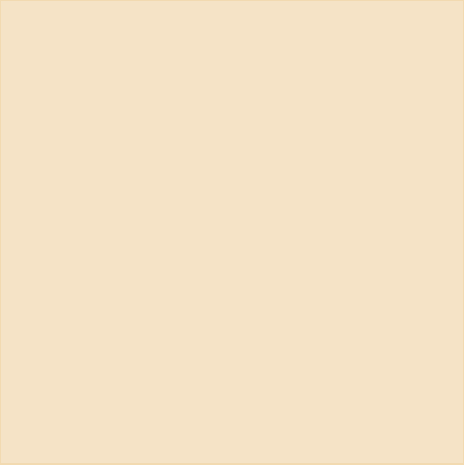
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Director

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Associate Director, Operations

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Associate Director, College Relations



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