Barton Community College
Great Bend, KA

PACE Student Success Report
Personal Assessment of the College Environment

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STUDENT SUCCESS LITERATURE REVIEW

Community colleges play a vital role in U.S. higher education, enrolling nearly one-third of students in degree-granting institutions each year (Dougherty, Lahr, & Morest, 2017). In recent years, community colleges have faced increasing pressure to improve student outcomes (Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, 2017; Bailey, 2016). This emphasis on student success has been driven by a combination of factors, including rapid changes in student demographics, concerns about persistent inequities in educational attainment and achievement, changing economic and workforce needs, reduced funding for public higher education, and general concerns about educational quality (Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, 2017; Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2012; Kinzie and Kuh, 2016).

To enhance student outcomes, community colleges must develop, apply, and measure progress against a clear definition of student success. Myriad definitions exist that include a wide range of concerns, from graduation and completion to persistence and retention, student engagement, and equity and diversity, among others (Astin, 1977, 1984, 1985, 1993; Barefoot, 2008; Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, 2010; Museus, 2013; Museus & Quaye, 2009; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, 2005; Rendón & Munoz, 2011; Tinto, 1993; Tinto & Pusser, 2006). While many community college leaders conceptualize student success in terms of degree and certification completion rates, greater demands for accountability across a variety of metrics have led many leaders to take a more holistic view of student success (Jenkins & Fink, 2016). For example, nearly all community colleges prioritize improving the outcomes of historically underserved students (Rodriguez, 2015). Further, in response to employers' observations about skills gaps among college graduates (Carnevale, Jayasundera, & Cheah, 2012; Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2011; Economist Intelligence Unit, 2014), many community college leaders have progressively turned their attention to assessing labor market outcomes and better preparing students for the workforce (Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, 2017). Some community colleges have begun to track transfer and bachelor's degree attainment rates more systematically (Jenkins & Fink, 2016). In short, many community colleges have come to define student success not only by what students achieve *during* college, but also *afterwards*. As the Aspen Institute (2017) notes, "Exceptional community colleges align programs with good post-graduation opportunities,

ensure that students have the broad and specific skills they will need after graduating, regularly check to make sure that the intended student outcomes are in fact achieved after graduation, and use systematic feedback from employers and university partners to update and improve their programs" (p. 4).

To develop a Student Success subscale best suited for community colleges, the NILIE staff adopted the Aspen Institute's definition of student success, focusing on four principal areas: completion and transfer, learning, labor market outcomes, and equity. According to the Aspen Institute (2017), "These four measures of excellence are not stand-alone metrics of performance; rather, they are interdependent parts of a definition of community college excellence that is student-centered and that reflects the reality that community college is not a final destination for students but a springboard to a wide array of opportunities after they transfer or graduate" (p.12). The table below provides further description of the four key areas of student success:

Completion and transfer with baccalaureate attainment	Ensuring that students earn associate's degrees and other meaningful credentials, as well as bachelor's degrees after they transfer.
Learning	Setting high expectations for what students should learn, measuring whether they are doing so, and using that information to engage faculty in improving teaching and curricula.
Labor market outcomes	Ensuring that graduates find and maintain employment that provides a family-sustaining wage after completion of a degree or credential, and using labor market outcomes to improve programs.
Equity	Ensuring equity in access and in learning, completion, and labor market success for minority, low-income, and other historically underserved students.

Source: College Excellence Program, Leading for Community College Excellence: Curricular Resources, The Aspen Institute (2017).

Using the PACE Student Success subscale, community college leaders have an opportunity to gain insight into employee perspectives regarding their institution's performance on critical student outcomes.

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Table 1. Student Success Frequency Distributions

Student Success	Response Option	BCC	
		Count	%
The extent to which...			
1 labor market outcomes for students are shared within this institution	Strongly disagree	4	2%
	Disagree somewhat	16	7%
	Neither	88	37%
	Agree somewhat	89	38%
	Strongly agree	40	17%
	Total	**237**	**100%**
2 this institution tracks student employment after they leave this institution	Strongly disagree	3	1%
	Disagree somewhat	13	6%
	Neither	105	47%
	Agree somewhat	62	28%
	Strongly agree	39	18%
	Total	**222**	**100%**
3 this institution partners with employers and businesses to offer opportunities for students	Strongly disagree	2	1%
	Disagree somewhat	13	5%
	Neither	63	26%
	Agree somewhat	101	41%
	Strongly agree	65	27%
	Total	**244**	**100%**
4 this institution identifies clear pathways to degree completion	Strongly disagree	4	1%
	Disagree somewhat	7	3%
	Neither	34	12%
	Agree somewhat	138	50%
	Strongly agree	92	33%
	Total	**275**	**100%**

Student Success (continued)	Response Option	BCC	
		Count	%
The extent to which...			
5 this institution has resources to help undecided students find a pathway	Strongly disagree	4	2%
	Disagree somewhat	10	4%
	Neither	68	26%
	Agree somewhat	111	43%
	Strongly agree	67	26%
	Total	**260**	**100%**
6 this institution uses completion rates as a metric for program success	Strongly disagree	3	1%
	Disagree somewhat	9	4%
	Neither	90	36%
	Agree somewhat	95	38%
	Strongly agree	53	21%
	Total	**250**	**100%**
7 this institution regularly assesses learning outcomes in individual courses	Strongly disagree	4	2%
	Disagree somewhat	5	2%
	Neither	42	16%
	Agree somewhat	127	48%
	Strongly agree	84	32%
	Total	**262**	**100%**
8 this institution regularly assesses learning outcomes for programs	Strongly disagree	2	1%
	Disagree somewhat	11	4%
	Neither	44	17%
	Agree somewhat	120	47%
	Strongly agree	79	31%
	Total	**256**	**100%**

	Student Success (continued)	Response Option	BCC	
			Count	%
The extent to which...				
9	this institution regularly assesses learning outcomes across the college	Strongly disagree	2	1%
		Disagree somewhat	10	4%
		Neither	50	20%
		Agree somewhat	116	46%
		Strongly agree	75	30%
		Total	**253**	**100%**
10	this institution disaggregates its data to show how programs serve different groups of students	Strongly disagree	6	3%
		Disagree somewhat	10	4%
		Neither	82	35%
		Agree somewhat	79	34%
		Strongly agree	54	23%
		Total	**231**	**100%**
11	this institution demonstrates a commitment to equity	Strongly disagree	3	1%
		Disagree somewhat	10	4%
		Neither	58	21%
		Agree somewhat	120	44%
		Strongly agree	83	30%
		Total	**274**	**100%**
12	there is a systematic process for identifying at-risk students and reaching out with appropriate interventions	Strongly disagree	6	2%
		Disagree somewhat	16	6%
		Neither	68	27%
		Agree somewhat	93	37%
		Strongly agree	67	27%
		Total	**250**	**100%**

Table 2. Student Success Item Mean Comparisons

Student Success Climate	BCC	
	N	Mean
The extent to which...		
1 labor market outcomes for students are shared within this institution	237	3.612
2 this institution tracks student employment after they leave this institution	222	3.545
3 this institution partners with employers and businesses to offer opportunities for students	244	3.877
4 this institution identifies clear pathways to degree completion	275	4.116
5 this institution has resources to help undecided students find a pathway	260	3.873
6 this institution uses completion rates as a metric for program success	250	3.744
7 this institution regularly assesses learning outcomes in individual courses	262	4.076
8 this institution regularly assesses learning outcomes for programs	256	4.027
9 this institution regularly assesses learning outcomes across the college	253	3.996
10 this institution disaggregates its data to show how programs serve different groups of students	231	3.714
11 this institution demonstrates a commitment to equity	274	3.985
12 there is a systematic process for identifying at-risk students and reaching out with appropriate interventions	250	3.796

Table 3. Mean Comparisons by Personnel Classification

What personnel classification are you:	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	292	3.911
Faculty	135	3.957
Administrator	17	3.841
Staff	140	3.875

Table 4. Mean Comparisons by Race/Ethnicity

Please select the race/ethnicity that best describes you:	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	287	3.904
Hispanic or Latino, of any race	7	4.554
American Indian or Alaska Native, not Hispanic or Latino	3	--
Asian, not Hispanic or Latino	2	--
Black, not Hispanic or Latino	12	3.781
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, not Hispanic or Latino	0	--
White, not Hispanic or Latino	249	3.920
Two or more races, not Hispanic or Latino	14	3.410

-- indicates results redacted for confidentiality

Table 5. Mean Comparisons by Employment Status

Your status at this institution is:	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	289	3.913
Full-Time	206	3.839
Part-Time	83	4.099

Table 6. Mean Comparisons by Highest Degree Earned

What is the highest degree you have earned?	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	291	3.921
First Professional degree (e.g., M.D., D.D.S., J.D., D.V.M.)	2	--
Doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D.)	19	3.883
Master's degree	124	3.863
Bachelor's degree	74	3.964
Associate's degree	47	3.891
High School diploma or GED	24	4.178
No diploma or degree	1	--

Table 7. Mean Comparisons by Gender

What gender are you:	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	290	3.908
Man	97	3.888
Woman	167	3.942
Another gender identity	3	--
I prefer not to respond	23	3.734

Table 8. Mean Comparisons by Years at this Institution

How many years have you worked at this institution?	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	275	3.921
5 years or less	123	4.015
6-10 years	66	3.825
11-15 years	28	3.737
16-20 years	26	3.847
21-25 years	11	3.958
26 years or more	21	3.990

Table 9. Mean Comparisons by Years in Higher Education

How many years have you worked in higher education?	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	279	3.922
5 years or less	92	4.015
6-10 years	69	3.858
11-15 years	32	3.848
16-20 years	38	4.009
21-25 years	19	3.788
26 years or more	29	3.832

Table 10. Mean Comparisons by Age

What is your age?	BCC	
	N	Mean
Overall	260	3.935
29 or younger	16	3.856
30 - 39	58	3.916
40 - 49	56	3.979
50 - 59	60	3.939
60 or older	70	3.931

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