

Metric I: Completion of Certificate and Degree in Four Years

- i. **Describe the improvement on this metric. Include the nature, scale, and timing of the student success reforms and practices that were implemented to improve these outcomes and the ways in which your analysis shows they contributed to the improved outcomes.**

Improvement in four-year degree completion has shown an overall upward trend from 37% to 48%. The 2013-2016 cohort used for the 2022 Leader College of Distinction Data collection. This reflected an 11-point difference. The College has worked diligently to make this improvement. The effort was intentional, planned, and highly focused. The College was motivated to improve the degree completion by the Arkansas Funding Model which weighted this metric at 45% of the productivity model. After much campus wide debate, four steps were taken beginning in 2016 to increase degree completion. **More high demand, high wage degrees and certificates were introduced** such as CDL/Truck Driving, 2016; Criminal Justice (2016), Cyber Security Programming/ Coding & Mobil Development (2017), HVAC, Accounting, and General Studies, 2018; Construction, 2019. The College examined the **progression rate** of time to degree which **increases the speed at which students complete their degree**. The progression metric accounted for 20% of the formula. The ATD Data Team members knew if we could improve these two metrics we would receive state productivity funding because it counted toward 65% of the formula. For two years we had received no equity funds but by the third year, because of the ATD strategies used, we were able to move the progression rate from -9.7 to -3.0 and had a 9.15% increase in credentials awarded. We accomplished this through a **Fifteen to Finish effort** increasing the number of credits students took. We increased full time status from 12 credit hours to 15-18 credit hours. **Advisors became more intentional using Guided Pathway plans and were more intrusive by engaging students in identifying academic, social, and emotional needs early in the semester**. NACADA assisted the college in examining the advising structure and provided a comprehensive report with helpful recommendations which assisted with advising restructuring. Through the use of intrusive advising to assist students with enrolling in fifteen or more credit hours, we helped ensure students completed their degree pathway. Also, the College encouraged **enrollment in remediation and gateway co-requisite courses in English and math which helped increase the speed of remediation completion for students**, another ATD strategy. When the productivity was introduced in 2016, PCCUA ranked second from the bottom in state productivity and by 2020 PCCUA had the second highest increase of the 22 Arkansas community colleges.

2497/2500

- ii. **Does this metric have a three-year change of at least three percentage points? Yes**
No Narrative Required
- iii. **Did your institution narrow an equity gap on this measure? Yes & No**

IF THE ANSWER IS YES: Describe:

- **The student groups for whom the equity gap narrowed or closed**
- **Why your institution focused on these student groups as part of your student success agenda**
- **The reforms and practices that contributed to these outcomes.**

PCCUA narrowed equity gaps related to four-year degree completion. The majority of the students at PCCUA are female (64.5%; IPEDS 2020) and they outperform male students. The faculty and advisors want to reduce the female to male performance gap.

The addition of new degrees which resulted in jobs and which may be more attractive to male students, has helped improve male program recruitment, enrollment, and completion.

Improvements have been made with narrowing the gender gap. Three-year data reflected a female completion rate which went from 39% to 41% and a male completion rate which went from 31% to 58%. This was a reversal in the gap because it went from an 8-point gap for females to males to a 17-point gap for males to females. Strategies which impacted this outcome include mandatory **Student Success I and II** classes facilitated by coaches who provide a wide array of support connections including financial and career coaching. The **Transitional Training Opportunity Program (TTOP)** is primarily male and all enrolled are required to be in a specifically designed Student Success cohort. Other strategies include intentional and intrusive advising, targeting largely male groups such as those participating in TTOP which is designed to recruit and support system impacted, post incarcerated students. The ethnicity degree completion in four years has also improved showing that white students improved from 39% to 49% and black students improved from 36% to 46% with a starting gap of four and narrowing the gap of four to one point. Both groups were the focus of the **Working Student Success Network** which was eventually replaced by **Holistic Student Support Redesign**. The effort to reach every student and address academic, social, physical, and emotional needs has been comprehensive. PCCUA has even established whole and individual group counseling sessions for TTOP students focusing on a wide range of topics. Intrusive and intentional advising, and an **Individual Career Plan (ICP)** paired with a fully outlined **Guided Pathways** has helped both groups improve completion rates. Finally, faculty provide an Early Intervention strategy requiring a third week authentic assessment and a learning plan for students who can't demonstrate they are performing adequately in the course. The plans may include a variety of options such as assigning a tutor, providing group study sessions, completing support help in the learning labs, or any extra help for academic support.

2455/2500 Inserted

- iv. **Any gap narrowing of less than two percentage points should be justified explaining why the change is substantive. If the gap was not narrowed at all, please leave this space blank.**

PCCUA narrowed equity gaps in two areas for completing a degree in four years. Because narrowing the gap is more than three percentage point changes for gender, no explanation is required for that characteristic. The ethnicity gap for degree completion in four years has decreased showing that both white and black students improved with white students moving from 39% to 49% and black students improving from 36% to 46%. The data reflected a starting gap of -4 and narrowed the gap to -2 making the gap change by one point. Throughout our ATD journey, this has been the most difficult characteristic to address for closing the gap. We have made progress but it is challenging to sustain that progress. It is possible that environmental changes like the loss of the middle-class working population that comes with declining enrollment, and the serious academic concerns the public schools in Phillips County face, impact high school performance producing more underprepared students. Another problem is that three of the high schools the college serves have great difficulty finding credentialed instructors, especially in math. Our Faculty Inquiry Group data does reveal that students are entering PCCUA with much lower placement scores. What is notable, is that the gap is far smaller than in past years. ATD strategies have helped PCCUA meet **Start to Finish** goals. Through ATD, the College has worked toward more appropriate college math and English placement. Math faculty developed and implemented a true math pathway offering options for students. Technical Math was added but at first it was hard to convince students to take the classes. More recently we introduced Quantitative Reasoning/Literacy. After much discussion, one of the issues was not the students but the advisors. Many lacked critical information about math placement and the confidence to encourage appropriate math enrollment. Once advisors were provided with professional development, we saw improvement in course placement and outcomes. Another incredibly helpful strategy was the faculty early alert. By week three of classes, faculty must give an authentic test. If students don't do well, faculty use various strategies such as advising, study sessions, learning centers, or assigned Learning Assistance lab assignments to ensure students are on the right path to success in their class. Faculty are required to have the plan in the syllabus and are required to review it frequently.

2464/2500 Inserted

II. Metric II: Persistence form Year to Year (Fall to Fall Retention)

i. Describe the improvement on this metric. Include the nature, scale, and timing of the student success reforms and practices that were implemented to improve these outcomes. Also describe the ways/processes in which your analysis shows they contributed to the improved outcomes.

Some PCCUA students lack resources to navigate traditional college enrollment terrain. Dropping in and out of college is not unusual. This makes improving Fall to Fall Persistence a challenge. This metric improved from 54% to 58% reflecting a four (4) point upward trend. All College employees have worked on improving term to term and fall to fall persistence because it helps keep students on track and increases the likelihood of certificate or degree completion. PCCUA is a Working Student Success Network (WSSN) college and we have added a similar initiative called Holistic Student Support

Redesign (HSSR). WSSN and HSSR are intended to integrate student supports central to student success. The holistic student supports approach emphasizes understanding design and delivering services that are critical for the success of every student. HSSR helped guide us in redesigning student supports so they were integrated, collaborative, holistic in nature, and enabled students to progress along their educational and career pathways. It intentionally maps and offers services broadly, strategically and equitably. The support services provided by the college include the academic support like tutoring and early intervention; however, the support like transportation, childcare, food pantries, career closets, and washeteria services are also critical to students being able to stay in school. Even student activities focus on student needs such as vaccination clinics, job fairs, and job placement. PCCUA also has **a SNAP coordinator on campus** to assist students. The College implemented an **Individual Career Plan (ICP)** which each entering student completes allowing them to self-identify needs before enrolling. This provides an opportunity for intrusive and intentional advising and for advisors and faculty to work directly with students as soon as a student enrolls. The **ICP paired with a Guided Pathway** has allowed **advisors** to connect with students to advise them about their program and available resources. Students must see their advisor three times during a semester which has increased preregistration but also allows advisors to make a real connection to the students they advise. In addition to advisors, the College has made **two Student Success classes mandatory** and both classes are led by ATD trained **coaches** facilitating support experiences and ensuring additional student touches.

2453/2500 Insert

ii. Does this metric have a three-year change of at least three percentage points? Yes

No Narrative Required

iii. Did your institution narrow an equity gap on this measure? Y Yes

Describe:

- The student groups for whom the equity gap narrowed or closed
- why your institution focused on these student groups as part of your student success agenda
- The reforms and practices that contributed to these outcomes

The PCCUA Fall to Fall Retention has improved. An examination of the College data reflects that Pell recipients improved Fall to Fall retention from 51% to 56% showing a 5% increase. Non-Pell recipients improved from 62% to 64% with a 2% increase. Although both groups improved, the gap between non-Pell recipients and Pell recipients was reduced from an 11-point gap to an 8-point gap.

The College serves one of the poorest regions in the nation, these are the underprepared and the under-resourced. Our students are amazing but many need help to remain in college. Two programs have had a profound impact on how the college engages students these are the **Working Student Success Network (WSSN) followed by the Holistic Student Support Redesign (HSSR)**. Both have ensured that the college continues to expand support services needed by our students. Another support resource is the Arkansas Career Pathways program which is a contributing force in being able to help students

needing financial aid assistance, child care, transportation, and so much more. The College also has a SNAP coordinator available to work with students.

PCCUA is a biracial college, and many of the white students attending are as poor as the black students. Sometimes reducing a gap does not always happen as quickly as desired but the work reflected in reducing the gap, even by a small margin, can be very important. Data analysis reflects that white students improved from 57% to 61% an increase of 4%. Black students improved from 49% to 54% with a 5% increase. While this only shows that the gap has been narrowed by 1%, college faculty and advisors have worked hard to reduce this gap. One of the most important efforts has been made with a focus on helping nursing students of color. More women of color are staying term to term and completing the program because of this effort. The second strategy or support program helping with the fall to fall persistence is provided through the **Transitional Training Opportunity Program (TTOP)** designed to provide holistic support to post incarcerated students and probationers no matter what program they enter. Most of these students are black but data shows they are re-enrolling fall to fall and completing programs. Engagement and support for clubs like Men Enrolling to Advance has resulted in mentoring for male students which we believe has also helped with persistence.

2480/2500 Insert

- iv. **Any gap narrowing of less than two percentage points should be justified with a trend note explaining why the change is substantive. If the gap was not narrowed at all, please leave this space blank.**

Data reflects that white students improved from 57% to 61% an increase of 4%. Black students improved from 49% to 54% with a 5% increase. While this only shows that the gap has been narrowed by 1%, this is a very important outcome. Our equity work and many of the holistic strategies in place, the developmental education co-requisite work, and the faculty three-week early intervention has been helpful. We understand we still must do better. Through our ATD efforts, PCCUA has focused on data disaggregation and analysis based on gender, race/ethnicity, and socio-economic level. This process is critical to College decision-making related to students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, PCCUA works to engage its stakeholder in crucial conversations regarding social justice, equity, accessibility, and race because these issues significantly impact the college culture. Community and campus-wide meetings have been scheduled to assist the College in identifying the best practices to eliminate challenges that confront our student body. Our goal is to establish tools for success. Another program extends the educational pipeline of support to our students upon entry and the completion of their degree or certificate. Student Engagement and more support for students of color is critical. PCCUA has implemented the following programs which seem to have helped improve persistence for black students. Another focus has been to maintain student development via registered student organizations like **Men Enrolling Toward Advancement (META)**, a peer support group for minority males. META members develop leadership and communication skills, participate in service-learning opportunities, and student programming on campus. The **Transitional Training Opportunity Program** has helped post incarcerated students remain on track to complete. During the last four years, PCCUA has provided **professional development focusing on Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning**. Fortunately, members of the professional staff are committed to culturally responsive interaction and engagement and with assisting with that development effort. This year PCCUA is boldly introducing two major

curriculum changes which are substantial. One is a math pilot on the Helena campus which is eliminating two remedial courses and replacing them with one credit hour support labs. The other pilot requires using a flipped classroom concept for reading and English on the two Arkansas County campuses.

2477/2500

III. Metric: Completion of Gateway Both Math or English

- i. **Describe the improvement on this metric. Include the nature, scale, and timing of the student success reforms and practices that were implemented to improve these outcomes and the ways/processes in which your analysis shows they contributed to the improved outcomes.**

The overall enrollment trend for Gateway Courses (Both) improved from 35% to 43%. This is an 8-point improvement or increase reflected on the trend line. Some of this improvement in this area has been as a result of **Strong Start to Finish (SStF)**. The SStF Team is composed of English and math instructors, representatives from advising, chairs of math and English, the CSSO, and the CAO. There have been numerous meetings with coaches, much professional development, courses, and other work completed through this effort. The College has examined data and taken certain actions. The most pronounced changes are with the ATD math strategies adding more appropriate math courses for the completion of remediation and decreasing remediation time. This initiative is guided by the Charles A. Dana Center, Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE), and Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC) Center for Student Success. By implementing SStF, PCCUA has engaged faculty who teach math and English to make the changes and they are examining ways to implement multiple measures for math placement. Faculty have engaged in hours of professional development for both math and English.

One of the most important ATD strategies implemented a few years ago was corequisite remedial and gateway courses for math and English this increases the speed for advancing through gateway courses for some students in remedial course work. Another strategy used by faculty in several Allied Health, math, English and Developmental Skills Departments is to use Faculty Inquiry Groups (FIGs) to analyze student performance, disaggregating data in a variety of ways and using the outcomes data to inform discussions and decisions.

1671/2500

- ii. **Does this metric have a three-year change of at least three percentage points? ☐ Yes ☐ No**
No Narrative Required

- ii. **Did your institution narrow an equity gap on this measure? ☐ Yes ☐ No**

IF THE ANSWER IS YES: Describe:

- **The student groups for whom the equity gap narrowed or closed**
- **Why your institution focused on these student groups as part of your student success agenda**

- **The reforms and practices that contributed to these outcomes**

Narrowing the gap is not required for the third metric but the data did reflect narrowing the gap. The equity gap was narrowed in two areas for Gateway courses (both). The gender gap went from 35-43% for females and 29%-38% for males. While both groups improved this showed a 1-point change narrowing the gap.

Section II: Narrative This section should elaborate on the narratives of success on specific outcomes that you described in Section I.

- I. **Please reflect on the extent to which your institution's culture promotes equity and demonstrate how your institution's approach builds on the foundations of the seven capacity areas of the ATD Institutional Capacity Framework. Share both how your work connects to the successes you shared in Section I and the opportunities you have identified for future work. Your narrative should include specifics on how you have addressed campus climate and fostered an inclusive culture. In addition to your overall equity work, discuss any equity work specifically focused on racial equity. Discussions of equity should include not only outcomes but any qualitative data you have on sense of belonging or student experiences on campus. Successful applicants will tell a cohesive, engaging story of how the institution leveraged and/or augmented institutional strengths to implement transformative student success reforms or programs, how your institution advances equity, including racial equity specifically, and the extent to which your college has built and/or strengthened capacity to sustain these reforms and achieve equitable outcomes at scale**

PCCUA completed the ICAT in the Fall of 2016 and later held open discussions about outcomes. Our intention was to complete the ICAT every four years. The pandemic placed that on hold. The outcome of our first survey resulted in the development of a strong 2020-25 Strategic Plan aligned with the ATD capacities. Every policy impacting students and faculty was reviewed to ensure obstacles were removed such as changing the GPA requirement to take an Independent Study and an online classis. Prior to this change students could not take either without a cumulative GPA of 2.5. Engagement and Communication were identified as strengths on the ICAT but our institutional SWOT analysis from 2013 and again in 2018 identified communication as a weakness so we continue to work on improving that indicator. The ICAT indicated that the data and technology capacity was adequate which is true but the College has continued to improve in these areas. Improvement on the Teaching and Learning capacity is continuous. Faculty have developed the three-week faculty authentic assessment with intervention which has helped with outcomes. Vision and Leadership were identified as strong. The weakest capacity reflected on the ICAT was Equity with a score of 3.0. The faculty and staff have engaged in much professional development about equity and inclusiveness. A search team for a new Vice Chancellor actively recruited minority applicants and a black female was hired. The Chancellor appointed a Diversity

Committee and a Director for Equity. The Executive Council was expanded so there was more minority inclusion. The culture shift to a more equity conscious and racially understanding environment which embraces diversity has evolved through painful conversations, dropping of defenses and rationalizations, and hard work.

Our story is simple and compelling. Every student registered is assigned an advisor who works from an Individual Career Plan (ICP) to determine the unique needs of that student whether they are a single parent, a wife fleeing from an abusive relationship, an ex con, or a homeless student, we do what we can to meet the holistic needs of every student. We learn more every year and student needs continue to surprise us. Homelessness, anxiety, and depression are the current obstacles that place our students in jeopardy of completing a degree. Guided Pathways is part of this ICP, and has allowed advisors to be intentional and identify a clear academic blueprint. The ICP has allowed the advisors to be intrusive recognizing from first contact what the student wants to do in life, what that student needs to do to achieve that life career goal, and what the College needs to do to make sure that this happens.

Our students live in one of the poorest communities in the United States, one which has high poverty, high illiteracy, and high crime. Two of the five counties in PCCUA's service area are among the twenty poorest counties in the nation. At any given semester when these students come to us, 97% of them are placed into at least one remedial class. Key strategies we have used at PCCUA to improve teaching and learning include curriculum redesign in developmental education coursework, implementation of supplemental instruction labs, student success classes, and professional development to more substantially engage faculty in improving student learning outcomes. Numerous other changes have been institutionalized such as evidence informed decision making, intrusive advising, early faculty intervention, expanded support services for students, professional development, faculty data capacity building, and reorganization of institutional priorities setting student success first on the college agenda.

We believe in student success, the power of education, and diversity. As a result, and through much professional development related to Culturally Responsive Teaching, diversity, the economic, social, and digital divide, has helped faculty appreciate that our college values can't be realized without help. The work we do as educators, facilitators and friends of our students is not learned and left but something that we must continuously strive to improve. Some of the barriers students face today are different from barriers faced five years ago.

4990/4300

- II. Benchmarking and Goals Process Does your institution have specific goals or benchmarks for student success metrics? e.g., 75% of all degree-seeking students completing 24 college-level credits in their first year; narrowing the racial equity gap on the percentage of students still enrolled at your institution after their first year; or, increasing the percentage of Pell students who earn any award in three years by 10 percentage points. Y Yes Y No**

IF THE ANSWER IS YES: Please discuss:

- How the goals or benchmarks were set (e.g., examining institutional data, state data, national data, and/or data from similar institutions)

If you sourced data from outside of your institution, what was your source? (This is not scored.)

- **How these goals or benchmarks align with your strategic plan and/or equity goals**
- **Your college's degree of satisfaction with progress toward reaching these goals or benchmarks. Are student outcomes on track with the institutional goals?**

The College uses college, state, and national data to benchmark student success. The purpose of this is to identify obstacles and challenges students or groups of students face and order to increase the chances for students to succeed in their academic career. This is the primary purpose for our strategic planning.

PCCUA has set specific benchmarks in the 2020-25 Strategic Plan which account for the **Institutional Key Performance Indicators and the Arkansas Productivity Funding Formula**. The ATD benchmarks are less restrictive and more compatible with community college enrollment outcomes. Currently, the ATD benchmarks tracked include term to term retention, fall to fall retention, course success, gateway completion (math, reading, and English), and program completion. We track on schedule completion, 150% completion, and 200% completion recognizing that many of the community college students take longer to complete. All benchmarks are disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, Pell status, and full and part time students. Through a Carl Perkins effort we are participating in Program Improvement Process for Equity (PIPE) working on efforts to address inequities in certain majors such as males in nursing, females in welding, black students transferring or enrolling in Stem studies. Using institutional data there has been an effort to show more diversity in recruiting materials, efforts to promote programs diversely, and high school fairs which encourage a diverse application pool for programs. Currently the college has included nursing and welding but will expand that effort to other majors. The PCCUA data reflects that we are on target with Four Year Completion (10%), Math Gateway (8%). We have shown progress with gateway improvement in several areas. We have reduced the performance gap in several areas but not with all benchmarks.

The Arkansas Productivity Funding Formula has to be tracked in order for the College to meet the three-year improvement cycles. benchmarks tracked by PCCUA are tied to the completion and improvement. We set a 1% threshold for improvement, knowing that if we set this too high, it could pose difficulties for us.

The formula tracks effectiveness tied to credential attainment, progression, and transfer; affordability tied to credits at completion, and time to degree; and efficiency tied to core ratio expenses and faculty to administrators' salaries. This formula encourages the college to monitor a variety of factors which can impact the outcomes.

2251/2500