

Guided Pathways Synopsis: Highline College

Purpose: This guide is a synopsis of the invaluable conversation that staff members of the State Board for Community and Technical College Education Division and Project Management Office had with leaders and key staff at Highline College around how their college is succeeding with Guided Pathways work. It also includes what Highline College needs from the system to continue their success.

Audience: College Subject Matter Experts (SME) interested in Guided Pathways.

 **When did we meet?** SBCTC and Highline College met on Friday, December 16, 2022.

Key Success Points

- ***Changing the Nature of Internal College Staff Interactions:*** What has been most illuminating about this work is that it is leading the college to breakdown silos, form cross divisional teams and establish a college wide internal communications team. Establishment of the new Student Success Council, which is ensuring accountability for the implementation of the Strategic Plan. All of these various communications and conversations on campus have brought to the surface things that the college has been able to work on together to improve areas, such as entry advising and admissions.
- ***Enabling Student Self-Efficacy:*** Faculty have been provided the opportunity to self-assess the work they do with students, providing concierge services to ensure students have access to the specific services they need and understand how they must navigate their educational pathways. Over the last few years Faculty have striven to capture that work and make it more readily available to students. By establishing that baseline information, available on the college website, the conversations with students can go deeper because students already have a basic understanding with their improved access to that information. When faculty do in class advising, they have a link or information that they can share with the student, improving that experience. Faculty and Advisors are now better prepared to mentor and direct accordingly. The website links and data shared with students is clear and easy to not only share, but for students to follow.
- ***Improvements in FA Process:*** Identified the jam in the flow of students entering the college. The work has been focused on transparency of processes and has been really successful. Also have been extremely communicative/inclusive with campus staff and faculty regarding processes and student steps.

- ***Student Success Focus:*** Structured strategic planning to focus on student success. Progress made in making information more transparent to the community and building data structures to better enable them to disaggregate by race and ethnicity across many data sets. The work within teams and with the Student Success Council positions them for a better communication structure with faculty, staff, and students.
- ***Associate of Art Direct Transfer Agreement (AA-DTA) Students:*** Beginning in the Fall of 2022 the college required students to take a "College 101" course, which is supported by the faculty senate. Reviewing for 5 terms and will reassess next January. There was a huge effort for the college and one they are very proud of. This effort was no small feat and involved months of faculty research to create program maps that enable students to navigate successful completion of their degree. Many faculty took the extra steps in researching major transfer partners prerequisites which should be included in time at Highline (CWU specifically). This effort represents the true meaning of student success focused.
- ***Institutional Effectiveness Plans:*** IE plans are a strategy used all across the college, not just in Academic Affairs. Student Services has also been regularly engaged in setting goals and improving services through the use of IE plans. Academic Affairs has an instructional leadership group meeting once a month to support each other. Consists of all departments across academic affairs to report out progress and hold each other accountable in a supportive way to improve student experience (using SMARTIE Goals).
- ***4 Phase Advising Model:*** Entry Advising, Pathway Advising, Faculty Advising and Completion/Transfer Advising. Still refining implementation of this model, but in its current state is a clear and understandable way in which students progress through the Advising support they need to be successful. Also have a visual that shows the map of the 4 phases.

4 Phase Advising Model Visual



- **IT Support:** Streamlining a simplified experience for logging into the different systems, namely OKTA. Have drop-in sessions at the beginning of each quarter.
- **Mental Health Services:** The college provides walk in and scheduled appointments on campus as well as remote. Not only are they present in offices, but also pushing out into the college community; operating services going into the college classroom letting students know counselors are available. This information is also communicated to staff and faculty who may need services.
- **High School Partnerships:** Building off of High School Completion program. Partnership with Highline Public Schools and Federal Way, which are primary feeder schools. Have a current grant with Tyee High School, offering College 101 classes for students in the high school, so high school students are already getting college credit! College staff are working with them on how to transition, inviting those students to campus where faculty can engage with them and begin building that relationship. More partnerships with feeder schools; ever growing.
- **Early Childhood Education:** To provide background info - most students with 30 credits or less go to Pathway Advising then are assigned to a faculty advisor. Some programs have opted to have students in their program immediately assigned to a faculty advisor related to the program. ECE is not the only program that does this. Opted into early advising/early faculty advising with their students. For example, there were students fall term unable to get into classes and once meeting with faculty they are enrolled and ready to get started with academic career for winter term. Working to ensure students have a strong start.

- **Open Educational Resources (OER):** Development and adoption of frameworks locally relevant and inclusive.
- **English Department:** Adding late start courses in English 101 and English 102 (pathway requirements) to ensure students registering after classes have filled and students registering in the first week can access these essential classes. Gave opportunity to capture enrollment. Also, members of the English department have participated in statewide anti-racist assessment projects (i.e. Antiracist Curriculum Initiative [ACI] and Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies [AWAE]). Many English faculty are in the Antiracist Curriculum Initiative [ACI] assessment curriculum doing labor-based grading practices.
- **Title III:** College is in the early stages of this 5 yr grant from the Dept of Ed. This is one of many focuses and most are aligned with Guided Pathways. Work to adopt more inclusive and anti-racist pedagogues. Mapped out what the framework would look like for communities of practice. Utilizing practices that are relevant and engaging to our student population and strengthens course-data informed curriculum and instruction (trained by Evergreen).
- **Program Maps:** While maps to clarify transfer options is critical, these maps also help ensure students complete their degree. As mentioned above under AA-DTA students, working with 4 year institutions to map pre-requisites and give recommendations so students can have streamlined plan for future completion. Professional-technical programs were much easier to map as the plans were already being used and easily translated for the most part.
- **AVISO - Student Success & Engagement:** AAR's are part of ctcLink and will always remain the degree audit of record, but AVISO tool helps us provide better information and direction to students. Extract the data and then utilize information in Aviso for progress monitoring. It allows staff and faculty to see student holistically. Notifies advisors of student progress and allows for monitoring and communication through text and/or email (students most convenient option). Can intervene prior to other steps needing to be taken. Aviso also allows for faculty to see all students info and profiles on one page. Proactive vs reactive.
- **Student Retention Department:** Student Services has recently established a new department of student retention to focus on data driven supports that inform where, when and how we intervene with students to keep them on the path.

Key Desired Improvements in ctcLink

- **Streamline Account Access:** Multiple accounts causes confusion for students, if there is a way to have ONE sign on and have it consistent for everything that would improve the student experience.
- **Predictive Courses:** Would like more intuitive process for students for the different pathways. For example, their course options without having to search through one by one along with how many being offered and what times. Knowing the sequential order of courses by eligibility and recommendations would be helpful for students when navigating. Ideally, only their options based on program map would show.

- **Curriculum and Course Changes:** Would like an integration with ctcLink which would accept the previously approved that only had minor edits made so they (staff) don't have to do manually. This would save the team the manual work of going through the curriculum management system.
- **Academic Advising Report (AAR):** Would like an integration where there isn't dual entry needed.
- **Student Alerts:** The current custom Student Alerts is not effective. There needs to be a more streamlined, improved experience for advisors and students. The college has built a lot of alert types and currently extract data, but would like a streamlined system.
- **Advisor Assignments:** The college would like more flexibility when assigning advisors. While there is a batch advisor upload, it's not efficient. It requires a college to group students under a single advisor and upload that group alone, then the next group under the next advisor, rather than having a single batch and uploading students with their advisor assignment. It would be great if there was the ability to assign students to an advisor or advisor group by Student Group or other Student Attributes.

Key Risk Points - Please Don't Disrupt This Process

- **GP Communications:** College will struggle with full GP implementation if we do not improve communication around GP efforts and clarify how everyone at Highline contributes to GP outcomes.
- **Staff & Leadership Turnover:** Highline is also struggling with staff/faculty retention and leadership turnover. This in part is due to compensation equity. If staff continue to churn we will risk losing institutional knowledge and struggle to make progress on GP.

Professional Development Opportunities

- *College did not highlight any specific areas where a professional development activity would help in their Guided Pathways work.*

Review of the Set of Questions SBCTC Asked All Colleges

1. What is your college most proud of in the work you are doing to make your college more equity-centered/student-centered? How is this shaping your strategic plans for process improvement over the next two years?
2. What has your office done successfully to remove barriers for students who are wanting to attend?
3. How successful do you feel your college has been developing program maps and providing opportunities for exploratory courses? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?

4. What changes have you made in your business practices to improve progress monitoring of students? What are you most proud of in your process for ensuring staff are involved in identifying students who are struggling? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?
5. Does your college currently use a Third Party Product (Starfish, EAB Navigate, Civitas, Watermark Aviso, etc.)? If your college is using any tertiary systems (external products, business intelligence systems, and/or locally developed solutions) to support Guided Pathways, what benefits are being provided that are not currently available in ctcLink?
6. How do you feel your college is doing in evaluating student enrollments and their alignment to completing a degree in two years? What changes have you made across student services to support this work? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?
7. What elements of the Guided Pathways framework is your institution currently prioritizing? How are you currently documenting your work? Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?

Questions for Specific Offices/Teams:

1. From each office (IT, Financial Aid, Admissions, etc.), what has been your greatest improvement to support Guided Pathways?
2. From each office, if you could improve the system in one small way to help your office significantly to support GP, what would you change in ctcLink?
3. From a data perspective-
 - a. How are you tracking a student's journey through their programs on your campus?
 - b. How are you currently reporting student enrollments by meta-major? Are you using locally developed Plan Code to Meta-Major crosswalks?
 - c. What data points are you finding it difficult to track in the system today and what would you learn from tracking that data?
 - d. Is there anything within the ctcLink system you wish could be improved to help with this work?
4. From your area's perspective, what key enhancements could you envision that would support your college's Guided Pathways work?