Annual Reflection Narrative

Due: May 15, 2013
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1 Introduction
All colleges (except for the 2012 Cohort that must submit an Implementation Proposal) are required to submit an Annual Reflection. The Annual Reflection, which provides an opportunity to consider your institution’s Achieving the Dream work over the past year and to plan for the coming year, replaces the previous requirement for an Annual Report. It comprises several components to guide institutions in this reflective process: the Principles Assessment Survey, Annual Reflection Narrative, Interventions Showcase Update, and Leader College Application (if relevant).

2 Stakeholder Engagement
Prior to completing the following questions for the Annual Reflection Narrative, we suggest that you engage a representative group of stakeholders (faculty, staff, and others who have been involved in your reform work) to consider, review, and discuss the institution’s student success and equity work.

3 Submitting Annual Reflection Narrative
Core Team Leaders will receive an email from Achieving the Dream by April 24th with a link to submit the Annual Reflection Narrative. The Core Team Leader will receive a separate email in mid-April with instructions on how to complete the institution’s Interventions Showcase Update.

Colleges will receive feedback on their Annual Reflection in the summer of 2013.

4 Questions
If you have a question about the Annual Reflection please send an email to info@achievingthedream.org or call 240-450-0075.
Annual Reflection Narrative Instructions

Below is a narrative section consisting of seven questions. This document serves as a template, so please write your responses directly into the spaces provided below.

*Note that the period covered by this Annual Reflection is May 2012-April 2013. Please reflect on activities during this time period throughout the narrative.*

1. **Contributors to the Annual Reflection:**

   Institution Name: Danville Area Community College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Contributors to this Annual Reflection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Alice Marie Jacobs</td>
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<td>Amber Anderson</td>
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<td>Kathy Sturgeon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Williams</td>
<td>Director, Adult Education</td>
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<td>Nancy Boesdorfer</td>
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<td>Patrick Bayard</td>
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<td>Dr. Penny McConnell</td>
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<td>Phillip Langley</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Rita Frerichs</td>
<td>Part-Time Faculty, Social Sciences</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Progress Statement:
   Please describe in no more than one page your institution’s progress in improving student success and completion. In what ways is your reform work transforming the way students experience college?

   This past year, the faculty, staff, and Board of Danville Area Community College (DACC) have really focused on moving from the Achieving the Dream initiative to a student success agenda overall. When working on our strategic plan for the next five years, the main questions we asked our faculty, staff, student, and community member focus groups centered on barriers to student success currently in place at the college. Our leaders have stayed committed to policy and procedural changes that impact student success such as the registration success line and mandatory orientation. Our leaders have also stayed committed to our student success agenda by providing the resources necessary to send ten faculty and staff members to the ATD DREAM meeting in Anaheim, California, this past February. Even with limited resources, our college president, CFO, and Board of Trustees understand the importance of Achieving the Dream and the student success strategies that come from this event.

   Our use of evidence has greatly increased with the addition of a data analyst position and the decision to refill a data specialist position after a retirement in the Institutional Effectiveness department. We are now better able to pull our data and see where our students are improving in terms of course completion as well as where we need to focus our efforts to close achievement gaps among student groups. Each ATD sub-team continues to evaluate their student success interventions to determine needed changes and will move forward with any needed changes over the next year.

   The college’s Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services still dedicates time at each Faculty and Staff In-Service to discuss Achieving the Dream and the student success agenda as a whole. This past January, we presented the main themes from our strategic plan focus groups to show how they connect with ATD principles. The ATD Leadership team also took time during this meeting to invite new members to join our ATD sub-teams in an effort to encourage fresh ideas. Faculty and staff members have also been working on
student success interventions within their own departments separate from those designed by our ATD sub-teams. Our Library department researched and implemented a library discovery tool that allows students to search the resources available to them through the DACC library including the in-house catalog and all the materials DACC students have available through our consortia. This is another financial commitment the college has made to leverage our resources for student success. One of our biology instructors added a supplemental instruction component to her Principles of Biology course in an effort to increase student understanding of this course, and our Math and Sciences division started a math and science tutoring lab to help students achieve higher levels of success in many of our math and science courses. These departmental efforts show how the culture of the college has changed and the faculty and staff are starting to fully embrace a student success agenda campus wide.

3. **Institution Context:**

Please consider both the positive and negative factors affecting the student success efforts at your institution and provide a brief (no more than one page) summary of the impact each has had on your progress this year. This summary may include aspects related to the institution’s culture and environment such as leadership changes, engagement of full- and part-time faculty, staff additions or lay-offs, state or federal influences, budget reductions, and reaffirmation of accreditation efforts.

A significant decrease in funding, the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, and the potential pension reform currently being discussed in the state legislature are the three biggest concerns here at Danville Area Community College. We do not feel that we have enough resources to implement our student success interventions in the best way possible. In addition to changes in financial resources, we are struggling with manpower as a resource as well. Those involved in our ATD interventions are still committed to increasing student success, but some setbacks in different areas have caused some team members to become disheartened. The necessary decision to leave some personnel positions vacant and cut some part-time faculty has led to the remaining faculty and staff taking on more responsibilities. When people get busy, it is harder to introduce new ideas and practices because everyone is so worried about simply getting their jobs done.

While looming budget concerns are the main negative factor affecting the student success efforts at DACC, we have worked hard to combat these concerns by focusing what limited resources we have available on our student success agenda and interventions that can positively impact the most students and their desire to reach their educational goals. This past year, our Board of Trustees and college president have committed to funding the college’s student success agenda through the fulfillment of certain positions on campus such as the data analyst and data specialist positions in the Institution Effectiveness office as well as through the purchase of technology to positively impact student success such as an early warning system/retention software. This software will require a large amount of faculty and staff buy-in to work to its highest potential, and while we know that we will never have 100% of faculty and staff on board, our faculty and staff engagement in the student success agenda is one of our most valuable resources here at DACC.
4. **Principles Assessment:**

For each principle listed below, provide a brief summary of your institution’s aggregate observations regarding the Principles Assessment Survey (see below). Please be sure to include recognition of achievements and challenges your college has experienced as well as a description of future plans. This summary should be no longer than 3 paragraphs for each principle and may also include a synopsis of your institution’s group discussions.

a. **Principle 1) Committed Leadership**

   a. The committed leadership of our DACC Board of Trustees, college president, and college administrators moves our student success agenda forward through increased communication of our intervention updates and student completion milestones at faculty, staff, and Board meetings and continued support of policy and procedural changes that improve student success. From our Faculty and Staff In-Services at the beginning of each semester to our Employee Recognition Banquet each April, the college president always takes time to address the efforts of our faculty and staff in terms of what we have done to help students complete courses successfully and showcase how far we have come in the past 4 years as an Achieving the Dream school. College administrators have also been charged with the task of promoting the student success agenda at departmental meetings to encourage consistent discussion of this topic.

   b. With financial concerns at the forefront of our planning for the next few years, some may see mandatory orientation and a registration deadline as road blocks to increasing student numbers and, in turn, tuition revenue. Fortunately, our shift from access to success is firmly entrenched in our campus culture, and we will continue these measures to ensure students have the tools they need to navigate our college system successfully. Due to our nearly constant orientation opportunities spanning ten months of the year, the next chance to start the enrollment process at DACC is never too far in the future.

b. **Principle 2) Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services**

   a. One of the toughest challenges we faced at DACC during our early years following the Achieving the Dream model centered on the concept of data-driven decisions. We had been so used to making changes based on what we “thought” would be best, that we had to work hard to change our mindset and first ask what the data was telling us about an area or issue before jumping to a conclusion to solve it. We are happy to say that this has been one of the most noticeable changes in how we approach matters in terms of student success interventions. Our IT department has increased to allow for faster data collection and analysis which has been vital in assessing how our students are doing and what still needs to be done in terms of successful completion and continuation of courses.

   b. While we could always use more resources in terms of IT, the addition of Jessica Miles, our new data analyst, has been instrumental in getting information in a timely manner and easy-to-read format. Because many people do not enjoy looking at data, having information presented in a functional and aesthetically pleasing way has made it much easier for people to absorb what the data is telling us and have better conversations about student progress. When we asked faculty, staff, students, and community members about potential student success barriers during our strategic plan focus groups, we used charts showing student completion rates in our gatekeeper courses to get ideas and dialogue flowing. This is not something we would have done before adopting the ATD principle of using evidence to improve policies, programs, and services here at DACC. This is a great start in using surveys and focus groups with students, faculty, and staff to identify weaknesses in programs and services and opportunities for improvement, but we need to make sure we continue this process to gather up-to-date information in the ever-changing environment that is the community college culture.
c. Principle 3) Broad Engagement

a. Faculty and staff engagement in the student success agenda has been a major focus on our Teaching and Learning sub-team since DACC joined the ATD initiative. Professional development opportunities such as cooperative learning training and the Teaching Excellence Academy events are some of the ways faculty have been encouraged to implement new student engagement strategies into their classes. Part-time faculty are also given a lot of these opportunities through the Part-Time Faculty Academy events during Faculty and Staff In-Service. These sessions have started being videotaped so faculty members who are not able to attend the PTFA can still view the material presented. As we have continued to offer these opportunities over the past year, one issue that has arisen is the fact that the same faculty members are participating in the Teaching Excellence Academy presentations. To help change this trend, our ATD Leadership team used the DREAM meeting as an opportunity to bring new faculty and staff into the Achieving the Dream experience and create more student success leaders on campus.

b. While we have worked hard to promote faculty and staff engagement in the student success agenda, one area on which we need to continue to focus is in the engagement of students and external stakeholders in efforts to improve student outcomes. All of the college’s ATD intervention progress information and data is shared with the 22-member Access, Equity, and Diversity community committee, our strategic plan focus groups included student groups and external community organizations, and we have worked with African American students through our AMALE and WISE groups to learn how we can better serve our students’ needs, but we can still do more. We need to set up surveys and routine focus groups to gain more consistent information about how we can make changes to help students reach their educational goals.

d. Principle 4) Systemic Institutional Improvement

a. One of our main focuses this year has been to move our campus culture from the Achieving the Dream initiative to a student success agenda as a whole. The college’s entire strategic planning process has centered on the question, “What policies and procedures are currently in place that could be seen as barriers to student success?” After gathering responses from faculty, staff, students, and community members, the strategic planning team compiled this information into general themes that we need to address over the next five years and presented this information at our Spring Faculty and Staff In-Service. In this presentation, they also connected the strategic plan themes with our current ATD interventions to show faculty and staff how interrelated these two concepts really are. We believe this helped more people understand why we are a part of the ATD initiative but also reinforced the idea that student success is really a shift in how the future of the college will be run and not just a “flavor of the month” idea.

b. One area of systemic institutional improvement that we need to work on is orienting new faculty and staff about our student success commitment and introducing them to the myriad of opportunities they have to help in this effort. Some faculty and staff on campus still believe they are doing all they can to help students succeed or feel like Achieving the Dream and our student success agenda do not apply to them. The ATD Leadership Team has tried to combat this mindset over the past year by publicly inviting people to join our ATD sub-teams at the Spring Faculty and Staff In-Service. The team also asked newer employees to attend the DREAM meeting this year to introduce them to Achieving the Dream and get them excited about the work we are doing to increase student success. These efforts have added new members to our sub-teams and started faculty-driven student success interventions independent from our ATD efforts.

e. Principle 5) Equity
a. Since joining Achieving the Dream and creating our initial sub-teams and student success interventions, equity has been a strong area of focus for us. Professional development on the topics of equity, inclusion, and cultural awareness have been provided to DACC full-time faculty and staff on an annual basis. We have hosted Dr. Bethanie Tucker, author of *Understanding and Engaging Under-Resourced College Students*, twice to provide insight into the obstacles under-resourced students face in attaining their educational goals. This professional development has also been offered to part-time faculty through the Part-time Faculty Academy. This summer, Carla Boyd, our Director of Career Services and a member of our Leadership team, Core and Data team, and Equity and Inclusion sub-team, is going to a training in understanding the poverty framework through AHA! Process so she can teach faculty and staff methods to move the college forward in our equity efforts. The goal of this intervention has been to provide training so that all faculty and staff can be more cognizant of the cultural differences and needs of students and be able to provide the best possible learning environment for each student. We have also conducted an equity survey twice over the past three years to gauge how the campus climate has changed from the start of this intervention to our current position with favorable results.

b. We are especially interested in working to promote equity on campus in an effort to close the achievement gaps between students of different ethnic groups and income levels as seen in the student completion rates for our gatekeeper courses. While some classes show an increase in student success overall, the gaps between white and minority students and non-Pell and Pell students is substantial enough to warrant increased action. The Equity and Inclusion sub-team has hosted the Finish Line simulation several members participated in during the DREAM meeting this past February at our most recent Core and Data team meeting. They will also run the simulation with all faculty and staff at the Faculty and Staff In-Service this fall to introduce this discussion campus wide.

*You may access complete definitions of each of the Five Principles [here](https://adobeformscentral.com/?f=3FfYgggsaO18alb4SANJDuQ)*

**Principles Assessment Survey**

To assist in the facilitation of a reflection on your institutional progress, Achieving the Dream has created a Principles Assessment Survey which should be used to solicit stakeholder feedback and group reflection and discussion. Achieving the Dream recommends that institutions administer this survey to a number of stakeholders college wide to ensure an inclusive representation.

The Principles Assessment survey may be used in one of two ways.

- **Option 1:** Administer the online survey by sharing the link ([https://adobeformscentral.com/?f=3FfYgggsaO18alb4SANJDuQ](https://adobeformscentral.com/?f=3FfYgggsaO18alb4SANJDuQ)) and ask stakeholders to submit their survey by April 18, 2013. Achieving the Dream will collect the results for your institution and send an aggregated response summary to your Core Team Leader the week of April 22, 2013. Please note that individual survey responses will be anonymous to both the institution and Achieving the Dream. Even individual survey responses will be identifiable only by an institution’s IPEDS Unit ID.

- **Option 2:** Download the survey and use it to structure a group reflection on the institution’s progress and complete the survey as a group. If your institution chooses this option, the college does not need to submit the completed survey(s) to Achieving the Dream.

Achieving the Dream suggests that the college engage a representative group of stakeholders to
review and discuss the institution’s student success and equity work, the results of the Principles Assessment, and outcomes data for the five Achieving the Dream student success measures (as described in Question 5 below). This discussion will be helpful as you complete the Annual Reflection Narrative.

5. Student Success Data:
Please review your institution’s disaggregated data for the five Achieving the Dream student success measures listed below. This data must be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and Pell status.

Next, prepare a one- to two-paragraph summary for each measure that a) describes your progress in comparison with previous year outcomes, (b) addresses rising or declining results over time, (c) explains your progress in closing achievement gaps among the disaggregated student groups, and (d) describes your plans for addressing decreases or sustaining and building increases. For at least one measure, please include a table or graph to illustrate your points.

Finally, describe any achievement gaps evident in the data for all five Achieving the Dream student success measures and explain how the institution is addressing or plans to address these gaps.

a. Measure One: Successful completion of developmental instruction and advancement to credit-bearing courses
   a. Success rates in the completion of developmental courses were down in cohort year 2011. Overall, there was a 6% decrease, including individual decreases in developmental math (down 6%) and developmental English (down 7%). Male students had a large decrease (15%), though success had spiked from 62% to 70% in cohort year 2010. The 55% success rate for cohort year 2011 was a small percentage lower than both the 2008 and 2009 cohort years (59% and 62%, respectively.) Female students had a small increase (2%) in success for cohort year 2011, though it followed a decrease of 8% between cohort 2009 and 2010. Disaggregation by ethnicity shows the success rates at a slight decrease (4% for both minority students and White, Non-Hispanic students). While success rates for developmental students showed decreases, advancement to credit bearing courses showed stability and improvement from cohort year 2010. Advancement to credit bearing courses the following term remained steady at 21% and eventual placement improved by 3% to 33%.
   b. One reason for the overall decrease in developmental courses could stem from the large decrease in students taking developmental courses. A large enrollment increase in cohort years 2008 and 2009 could be skewing the data to show a larger decrease from cohort year 2009 to 2010 and cohort year 2010 to 2011. Advancement to credit bearing courses has remained steady or increased due to several changes in our developmental courses such as the incorporation of technology in the classroom with SMART boards and online coursework, purposeful alignment of 098 and 099 courses, and work with acceleration to decrease the amount of time it takes students to complete developmental courses.

b. Measure Two: Enrollment in and successful completion of the initial college-level “gateway” math and English courses (see Appendix 1.1 for chart information)
   a. Overall, there were several increases in initial gatekeeper enrollment and success from cohort year 2010 to 2011. Individually, English (including ENGL-121 and ENGL-101 courses) was up a total of 7% from cohort year 2010. These English courses have shown a steady increase over the four years that data has been collected but a 7% increase is the largest between years thus far. Math (which consisted of MATH-105) increased 1% from cohort year 2010 to 2011 after a small decrease in 2009. Male students have shown great improvement in success from cohort year 2010 with an 8% increase in English and a 12% increase in math. Female students show a 7%
increase in English success. Minority students show large increases throughout the data (10% in English and 14% in math). White, Non-Hispanic students show similar upward growth in success up 6% in English, and steady in math from cohort 2010. Pell recipient students also show growth in success overall with a 9% increase in English. Math was decreased by 6% following a large increase in 2010.

b. Our increases in ENGL 121 and ENGL 101 are due to changes in the policies and procedures of how these courses are taught and evaluated. ENGL 101 was of particular interest because it is required for so many of our programs, and one aspect of the course specifically, the Exit Exam, was causing several students to fail the course even though they had earned a passing grade in the class before the exam was taken. After researching other colleges and their policies and procedures surrounding their college composition courses, the Writing Committee determined that the Exit Exam should not be the only deciding factor for course competency and decided to eliminate the exam as a requirement for passing the class. Students in ENGL 101 now complete a writing sample similar to the Exit Exam and the course competency for ENGL 121 in their classes as part of course requirements.

c. Measure Three: Course completion with a grade of “C” or better

a. Course completions with a “C” or better grade were down, overall, by 4% for cohort year 2011. Disaggregation of the data, however, shows improvement in several categories. Both male and female students had more success in cohort year 2011 than in cohort year 2010. Male student success increased 5% while female students show a smaller increase of 3% for cohort year 2011. Minority students show a 5% increase in success, reaching the highest success rate in four years of data tracking (22%). White, Non-Hispanic students experienced an 8% increase, showing the highest success with a grade of “C” or better since cohort year 2008. The only decrease in success was in the Ethnicity Unknown category which contains students who have not or refuse to indicate ethnicity. The 5% decrease in success there is most likely the cause of the 4% overall decline, as rates in all other categories show improvement.

b. In an effort to create more student engagement in the classrooms, the Teaching & Learning sub-team has focused its efforts on introducing and promoting cooperative learning and other classroom management topics to the faculty of DACC. Through professional development trainings and faculty breakfasts (our Teaching Excellence Academy workshops), our instructors are learning how best to adopt different tools to help increase student success. The high amount of faculty buy-in stems from the fact that the faculty breakfasts are faculty-led and faculty-presented. This past year, the Teaching and Learning sub-team reviewed course completion data for our gatekeeper courses and found that faculty members who attended the Teaching Excellence Academy workshops had higher student completion rates than those who did not.

d. Measure Four: Term-to-term and year-to-year retention

a. Retention to the next term has increased 4% overall and is equal to or even with the previous year in nearly all categories when the data is disaggregated. Retention had fallen in cohort year 2010 but began to rise again in cohort year 2011. Minority students have remained steady at 70% retention to the next term for three cohort years. Male students experienced a great increase in persistence to the next term (up 11% from cohort year 2010.) Female students dropped slightly (2%) in cohort year 2011. Pell recipients showed a great increase from the 2010 cohort, up 15% in cohort year 2011. Retention to the next fall term has declined by 6% overall and disaggregation of the data shows dips in the numbers in all categories except the Non-Resident Alien/Unknown Ethnicity category which contains students who have refused to indicate their ethnicity.
b. In alignment with improving our first year experience, orientation was revised for Spring 2011 and is now mandatory. With this change, the number of orientation participants almost doubled over the last year. Late registration has been abolished for new students, and these students must now register 10 days before classes start. The student success course has been re-designed and scaled to include all sections. We believe these interventions have helped increase the term-to-term retention rates of our students over the last year.

e. Measure Five: Completion of certificates or degrees

a. Degree completions are up by a count of 27 from cohort year 2010. This increase closely matches the increase between cohort year 2009 and cohort year 2010 (a count of 29), which indicates a pattern of steady growth for the past three years. Cohort year 2011 shows the strongest year yet with 305 degree completions. There has been some increase in degrees from minority students over the years, leading to the largest number of degree completions yet in cohort year 2011. Numbers have also risen for both male and female students; male numbers have progressed with only a minor dip in numbers in cohort year 2009, while female completion numbers have fluctuated a bit before seeing continuous progress from cohort year 2009 through cohort year 2011.

b. Certificate completions are down by a count of 52 from cohort year 2010. This decrease comes after a large increase in cohort year 2010 (increase of 78) after two years of remaining steadily at a count of 413. There has been some increase in certificates from minority students over the years, leading to the largest number of completions yet in cohort year 2011 (28%). Numbers also rose for male students in cohort year 2011 by 4%, though there was a small decline in female certificate completers (4%). Our decrease in certificate completions this past year is due mostly to the fact two of the certificates we offer through the prison were not available for completion, because the Department of Corrections would not allow us to hire new instructors for these programs due to budgetary constraints. This has been remedied and will likely bring our certificate completion numbers back up this coming year.

f. Describe any achievement gaps evident in the data for all Achieving the Dream student success measures and explain how the institution is addressing or plans to address these gaps.

a. The achievement gaps we have found most consistently across all measures of student success are those between minority and White, Non-Hispanic students and Pell-eligible and non-Pell-eligible students. We are especially interested in working to promote equity on campus in an effort to close these achievement gaps between students of different ethnic groups and income levels. While some classes show an increase in student success overall, the gaps between white and minority students and non-Pell and Pell students is substantial enough to warrant increased action. The Equity and Inclusion sub-team has hosted the Finish Line simulation several members participated in during the DREAM meeting this past February at our most recent Core and Data team meeting and will run the simulation with all faculty and staff at the Faculty and Staff In-Service this fall to introduce this discussion campus wide.

b. Professional development on the topics of equity, inclusion, and/or cultural awareness have also been provided to DACC full-time faculty and staff on an annual basis. We have hosted Dr. Bethanie Tucker, author of *Understanding and Engaging Under-Resourced College Students*, twice to provide insight into the obstacles under-resourced students face in attaining their educational goals. This professional development has also been offered to part-time faculty through the Part-time Faculty Academy. The goal of this intervention has been to provide training so that all faculty and staff can be more cognizant of the cultural differences and needs of students and be able to provide the best possible learning environment for each student. We have
also conducted an equity survey twice over the past three years to gauge how the campus climate has changed from the start of this intervention to our current position with favorable results.

6. Student Success or Completion Efforts:  
In addition to Achieving the Dream, with which other student success efforts is your institution affiliated? Please put a check next to each that applies.

- [ ] ACE
- [ ] Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning Quantway
- [ ] Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning Statway
- [ ] Complete College America
- [ ] Completion by Design
- [ ] FIPSE
- [ ] Foundations of Excellence
- [ ] New Mathways (Dana Center)
- [ ] Reaffirmation of Accreditation
- [ ] Title III
- [ ] Others (please list: TRIO and Pathways to Results)

7. Sharing:  
Is there any additional information you would like to share with Achieving the Dream in this reflection?

8. Reminder:  
As part of your Annual Reflection, your institution must complete the Interventions Showcase Update online by May 15, 2013. If your college is applying for Leader College status, it must also complete the 2013 Leader College Application by May 15, 2013.

- Interventions Showcase Update: Your institution’s Core Team Leader will receive an email in mid-April with information about how to review and update your intervention information (for example, updates on your student success policies and practices). (Due May 15)

- 2013 Leader College Application: Colleges that are applying for Leader College status must also complete Appendix Two (Due May 15). If your college is not applying for Leader College status, you do not need to complete this application.
Appendix 1.1 Initial Math and English Gatekeeper Course Enrollment and Success

Overall Success

Male Success

Female Success